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story

The Mah Jong Game

The perspiration poured down Old Jung's face, gleaming in the reflection of the one-hundred watt lamp, which was suspended on a long black wire. Jung's face showed no emotion or expression of defeat, but underneath the table his hands trembled as he realized how far behind he was, how utterly hopeless it seemed now to win back the three thousand points which he lost.

The three men, participants in the game, were also quiet and unmoved. Especially Foon, the old restaurant man, who had won about four thousand points.

Old Jung realized the desperate situation he was in. His only revealing gesture of fear was his trembling hands. His face was like a cold marble statue, so motionless was it. No one looking at his face would think that he was three thousand points behind. In fact, one would think that he was ahead, and that he did not wish to show it.

Since six in the evening he had remained there, playing two complete rounds of mah jong. Now it was ten in the evening, but Jung was not conscious of the fleeting time, he only knew that he could not go on losing, especially when he was playing a hundred dollars a thousand points.

It was the largest money game he had ever played, but he was confident before he started that he would win, in fact, he must win to get out of debt. Bad luck was with him tonight. Four long hours he played on, only to win but three games of sixty points each. The realization of the seriousness of his position came when he lost a five hundred points game to

Wing Kur. From that moment on, he kept losing until he was behind three thousand points.

Now it was the north wind again, the last wind of the game. Old Jung knew that if he did not win now, it would set him back three hundred dollars. He shuddered when he thought of the money. Where could he get three hundred dollars. Even if it was but fifty dollars, he would not be able to pay it.

He clenched his teeth together, determined to win, absolutely sure that he must not lose anymore. If he could win but one big game, it would be better than winning a series of small ones. He must win when the jong comes to him. Then he would win double the amount.

Old Jung glanced now and then at the other men. It was evident that Foon was playing a careful game, eager to hold on to his winnings. The others who were behind played a game of chance, taking risks, determined to win back at least part of what they lost. But Old Jung was the one who was really behind. Wing Kur lost only six hundred points. And Woo the merchant was behind by a scant three hundred points.

But at a hundred dollars a thousand points, every point counts. Every point one wins is ten cents.

Wing Kur and Woo were both trying for a three doubles game, Old Jung noticed. Both were discarding the character and bamboo suits, retaining all tiles which belonged to the dot suit.

Old Jung glanced at his hand. Experience taught him that it was useless to get a winning combination out of his hand now. The only thing left was to prevent Wing Kur, who

sat on the right of him, from forming sequences of tiles which Old Jung was to discard. Noticing the discards of tiles by Wing Kur, Jung was able to guess that Kur was trying for a three doubles suit.

He watched on, with a fear in his heart, his whole body numb with fright. If only he could prevent Wing Kur from winning. He knew that it all depended upon him, since he was sitting on the left of Kur, and Kur was the only one who could form sequences of ~~of~~ tiles which he discarded.

Jung couldn't understand his bad luck tonight. He had never lost so much. The most he ever lost was one or two hundred points, sometimes possibly three hundred. But three thousand points! He shuddered. He was not conscious of the passing of time. His whole attention was drawn on the mah jong tiles, hoping for a chance to win. But so far that chance had evaded him, until now, there were but two more games to go.

Jung's eyes became dazed by the strong light, and the bright red color of the mah jong hurt his eyes too. For four long hours he had remained in his seat, not once getting up, not once stopping for a moment of rest, but deep in the game, trying desperately to win back what he lost. He was determined to win, regardless of how long he had to stay there.

He watched with carefulness the discarding of the tiles, hoping for a revealing sign that the others might give themselves away. He had played the game for so many years that he possessed a sort of clairvoyant power which enabled him to guess with a high percentage of accuracy the concealed tiles of the other players. Yet, despite this fact,

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he was losing.

There was no need to talk. Each player was too interested in his playing to talk. The game continued on. Usually there were men watching the game, but tonight since it was a big money game, no one was allowed to see for fear he might give signals to the other players.

The four men were playing alone. The hours ticked away.

The last game came. When Old Jung received the north wind jong, he was still three thousand points behind. It was the last game, and he decided to play a game of thirteen orphans, a game which if played right, he would have thirteen chances of winning. It was the only way which he get back what he lost.

He threw the dices. The wall was opened across from him. When he looked at his fourteen tiles he noticed that he had nine of the thirteen orphans in his hand. He threw out one of the useless tiles, the six of bamboo. Later, after playing awhile, he saw that he had ten of the thirteen orphans. His hands trembled. If only no one would win now. All he needed was a little time, a time to get thirteen complete orphans and a pair of eyes. He noticed that Wing Kur and Woo were again trying for a three doubles hand. They did not worry him, for he knew that they would take a long time to get a winning combination. But Foon was trying to win in the shortest moment possible. He was already waiting for the winning tile to be discarded.

Playing went around a few more turns. When Jung drew again, he got a red dragon. His heart almost stopped when he

saw his thirteen tiles. He had the one of character, the one of dot, the one of bamboo, the nine of character, the nine of dot, the nine of bamboo, one east wind, one west wind, one north wind, one south wind, a red dragon, a green dragon, and a white dragon.

If anyone player discarded anyone of them, he would win. And he was the jong. He would win double the amount. It was the highest game that could be won. A thousand points from each player.

Jung looked at Foon again. He was afraid that Foon might win before him. On and on the game went. There was a tenseness in the air which frightened Jung. He could hear his heart beating loudly. Thirteen chances to win. He must win.

When his chance came again he took a tile from the wall. His fingers felt the smoothness of the tile. For a moment a look of puzzlement came into his face. Then it brightened. He had gotten a white dragon. He had won. He had won back his three thousand points. His whole body relaxed. For the first time since six in the evening, he let out a breath.

Dazed, still hardly believing the miracle he accomplished in the last game, he came out of the gambling shop, his hands and feet unsteady.

But anyone looking at him would know that never again would he go near a gambling shop.

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The Seventh Day Tragedy

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It was in this way that Jung, the son of Uncle Quan, died his death. A death which started its fatal beginning in the Birthday of Men, otherwise known as the seventh day of the Chinese New Year. Although he did not died till the Birthday of the Robber, the tenth day of the New Year, the relatives and folks blamed his death on what he did in the Birthday of the Men.

The next day was to be New Year's eve. Aunt Quan was going about in a busy manner. She was preparing celebration to the gods and goddesses. Just the day before she had changed a twenty dollar bill into quarters. And she had carefully wrapped each quarter into a piece of red good luck paper. These good luck money was to be distributed to the children of her many friends.

Aunt Quan had but two ~~child~~ children of her own. Jung was the older and Hoi was the younger. Jung was very playful and peppy. His small brother was a direct opposite of him. Jung was by no means a naughty boy. He was playful and he could not stay still doing nothing. Hoi was always hanging around his mother. He stayed in the house so often that the little boys from the neighborhood called him a sissy boy. Another thing which prompted him this name was the fact that he still wore short pants even though he was ten years of age. Jung was twelve.

Now Jung was a very handsome little boy. Despite his playfulness his parents liked him better than his quiet brother. Aunt Quan used to say to her many friends, "I like Jung better because he is not afraid of people. His small brother hides whenever any strangers come around. Besides Hoi is too quiet to be a boy. Why, sometimes I think he should have been a little girl. He is so weak and delicate. But Jung is very rough and he is a boy."

Jung, even though he was but twelve, scorned upon superstition of the old country. He did not understand why his mother did such odd things during the New Year. He had always said to himself, "Why isn't mother like father? Must she always be so old-fashioned? Yee's father and mother are so modern. They don't do any of the strange and odd things that mother does." He was rather ashamed of his mother.

He used to get mad because his mother had small feet. And what's more she wore the typical old Chinese costume. And he remembered many times how people stared at her when he went up town with his mother. He was humiliated because his mother was behind the times.

Many times when I was out in the streets playing, he said to me, "I wished my mother was like yours. Your mother does not have small feet and she does not dress up in old Chinese clothes. You are so very fortunate." But I did not tell him that my mother was very superstitious too. Instead I smiled a vague smile and let him know that I am pleased with what he said.

Aunt Quan was very superstious. So much that days before New Year came, she was preparing for it. On New Year's Eve she pasted mottoes brushed in black ink on red paper upon the rooms in the house. In the guest rooms there were two, one on each side of the lilies. One was a greeting for the New Year. The other was something about money and riches.

When Jung came into his room he saw one of these red paper on his bedroom wall. It stood out conspicuously on the bleak wall. He looked under his pillow and there was a dime wrapped in red paper. And also a tiny little orange.

He remembered how he used to look forward to the New Year because then, he could receive many dollars in money. He remembered when he was quite small how he used to have a little box which he used purposely to put his New Year's money in. He remembered how he used to secretly open the red paper and to see how much the money was and how he counted them to see what the amount was.

He used to look forward to the New Year because he was able to leave school for one whole day and he could stay home and help his mother do this and that. Then, it was a pleasure to him. But as the years went by he was not so enthusiastic in all the fuss and bother.

Now this New Year's eve, his ~~aunt~~ mother was very busy. She was phoning to the store to get this and that. She was getting the house ready for the New Year. She swept the floor and then she washed it. Windows which were filled with grease for almost a year had its first cleaning. New tablecloths were bought. New shoes for the children and new clothes too.

Rice powder used for making puddings and fancy articles were all ready put away. Bamboo shoots, bean sprouts, white-silky noodles, colored fancy food and scores of necessary food were all prepared for the midnight dinner on New Year's eve.

In the night everybody was prepared for the celebration. Aunt Quan place a chicken on the table with three glasses of wine and three pair of chopsticks. In a little bottle filled with sawdust she placed two wax red candles into the jar. She burned incense and then going to the head of the table she silently said a little prayer and then she made each one of her children do the same.

Then she burned golden paper ~~and~~ from the candles on the table. And she swung the burning papers up and down and twirled them around the room. Then she placed a lotterly ticket under the burning incense and let the burnt ashes dropped on the ticket. By the impression it made the ~~aunt~~ mother would put that ticket in the company and hoped that it will hit and get some money. Now whan Jung saw his mother did that every year, it grew a little monotonous to him. Today it no longer holds any satisfaction to him.

In the evening before the New Year Aunt Quan said to each one of her children, "Tomorrow I want each one of you to wake up with a smile. I do not want any fighting from anyone of you. I want you to be careful of your speech. That is the most important thing. Be careful of your speech. And most important of all, I do not want any crying from any of you. Tomorrow is the first day of New Year. And that day no one cries or quarrels."

The little boys listened to what the mother was saying. But Jung was not listening attentively. He had heard it so many times that now he could recite it by heart if he wished. Hoi asked his mother, "Could I wear my new shoes and new suit tomorrow?"

"Why, of course. Jung, I want you to dress up tomorrow."

Tomorrow was to be the first day of New Year. All the little boys and girls would be absent from school to celebrate. Jung was rather lonesome as he did not want to leave school. He knew that many big boys and girls who went to the high school were not absent because it was New Year. And he thought that he was not a little boy anymore. He was almost thirteen and he was in the low eighth grade. But he did not go because he knew that all the other boys and girls in the class would be absent too. So he stayed home much

as he disliked it.

Today was the first day of the New Year. It was the Birthday Of the Chicken. Jung woke up tired as he did not go to bed till after twelve. At midnight he ate "jide"with the whole family. And some rice. It was exactly midnight when the family gathered around the table. His father, his mother, Hoi, and himself. And they did not start till everyone was seated at the table. That was the custom he was told. Everyone of the family must be at the table. He remembered how silent everyone had been while eating. He heard the rattling of the chopsticks on the porcelain bowls.

Before he went to bed his mother said to him, "Jung, I want you to call everyone by their right terms tomorrow. You know, tomorrow is New Year and you must be polite. And when anyone comes, I want you to serve tea and be sure to offer it with both hands. I want you to pass out the sweet melons and the black and red melon seeds. When you give ~~it~~ them to the guests remember to say, 'W'ont you gather some gold dust?' To the men you must pass out cigars and cigarettes.

"When you offer tea you must also pass out slices of thin sweet cocoanut and sweet delicacies for the guests to sweeten the tea. I want you to remember all this tomorrow. And be sure to put on your new suit and new socks. And also the black shoes." Jung listened to all this without apparent interest.

Now this morning when he woke he was tired and fatigue by the short rest. It was now nine O'clock and the day was cloudy and gray. He put on his new suit and new shoes and felt very awkward in ~~it.~~ them. He combed his hair and then he came down. There ~~was~~ were his mother and father already up and all dressed in new clothes and new shoes. Hoi was still asleep in his room.

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Now when Jung saw his mother, he knew he must called her and ~~sined~~ wished her greetings and happiness for the New Year. He must say the same to his father. After greeting both his father and mother he went out into the streets to shoot firecrackers. But before he did his mother gave him a quarter wrapped in red paper and his father gave him one also.

As was the custom, his father shot a package himself. The rest he gave to his two little boys. Thus Jung had a great many firecrackers to shoot. Later ~~Jung~~ Hoi came out to join him and he was dressed in all his new clothes and he had on a scarlet red tie. Seeing this, Jung could almost yell. But he offered some firecrackers to his brother and throughout the morning they shot black powder firecrackers and flashlight firecrackers. At lunch time Aunt Quan came out and called them in.

Before they started to eat Aunt Quan said to them, "Be careful of your dishes and bowls. Do not drop them on the floor." Now Jung had heard this year after year and he did not paid any attention to what his mother said to him.

There was roast duck and cold chicken. Also abalone with oyster sauce. Soups and dried oysters cooked with great big mushrooms. And the family ate their fill. After eating, Uncle Quan played the phonograph. And he choose one entitled "The Big Open Door" and the loud music could be heard even way out in the streets.

The passers by stopped and listened and smiled. For that was a proper song to play on the Birthday of the Chicken. Aunt Quan said to Jung, "I don't want you to play any sad and melancholy music today. If you must play them wait until a later day. Today is the first day and it is a bad sign to have sad music in the house.

But you could play "The Big Open Door" as much as you like." Again Jung was irritated because he had heard that many times also. He thought his mother was unfair always saytng this and that to him. She never scolded Hoi. Jung was moody and sad all during the day.

About one o'clock in the afternoon the guests began to arrive. The first was an old man who was always the first one to come every year. He was a big fat man with a very broad smile. He came and Jung brought him tea and seeing that his mother was watching him, he offered it with both hands. And timidly he said to the man, "W'ont you gather some gold dust?" But inside of him he could not help laughing because it was so funny. He felt so uncomfortable in his new clothes. And his new shoes was hurting him so that he had a most difficult time in walking.

And to add to his discomfort people said to his mother, "My, what a big boy Jung is now. He is a little young man. Let's see, how old is he? Oh, yes, why, he is almost fifteen." And Jung would grow red in the face because he was only thirteen. But those old folks were like that. Always exaggerating. He would like to come right out and scold them all. Only this was the first day and he did not dare much as he liked to.

And so all through the afternoon. Offering tea, saying to the guests to gather gold dust, and receiving money in red paper. What'S more, he had to wear his tight shoes and new clothes. He hated them.

In the evening at six o'clock my mother and I went over to visit Aunt Quan. We were staying for dinner as Aunt Quan had invited us over.

I was all dressed up in a bright outfit. I had a sailor cap which I admired very much. I looked in the mirror and admired it.

So taking my small hand my mother led me over to Aunt Quan's house. We arrived there and everything was all set for dinner.

I went over to talk to Jung. He greeted me with a cheery hello. He and I were in the same class even though I was two years younger than Jung. I was crazy about money and I asked Jung how much he had received already. He said, "I don't know. I did not count them yet." I secretly told him that I already received about seven dollars. I secretly counted them without letting my mother know. Then Jung took me into a small room and together we counted his money together. He received about two dollars less than I. Then we carefully wrapped the money back so that no one would know that they had been opened.

We came out to dinner. First the men drank whiskey. Even the women were a little brave and they drank rice whiskey while the men drank strong liquor. There was talk about this and that. Jung sat silent all through the meal. I did not talk with anyone because the voices of the men and women would drown me out. After dinner the women separated and went into the kitchen. The men sat in the parlor and talked about politics and every little thing. Jung and I went to the bedroom. He said to me, "Did your mother paste a motto on your wall?" I said, "No, she dropped doing that long ago." He said, "I wish my mother would stop doing it. It makes me feel so uncomfortable. Besides I am so big now and people would laugh at me if they knew." I quite agreed with my friend. I knew I would not like to have those mottoes in my room.

We came out into the kitchen and most of the women were getting reading to make fancy cakes and dishes. Aunt Quan passed out aprons to each one of the women who were going to help with the work.

My mother was cutting up sweet melon and cocoanut candy.

Another woman was roasting peanuts by the stove in the corner.

Aunt Quan was boiling oil in the big stove; she turned the gas down when the oil boiled too freely. An old woman, whose face was wrinkled and dry was putting candy and cocoanut into a small piece of dough and she rolled it close with her hand, until the dough was round as a ball. She then sprinkled some seeds, which had been previously fried, over the ball of dough and the preliminary step to the "gin dur" was finished. Another women, very young and beautiful ~~were~~ was mixing the dough with her bare hands. And she poured melted-brown sugar syrup into the dough once in awhile. With her hands she squeezed and pushed the dough until it was well mixed and well browned. Then the old dry woman fixed the next step. After she finished that, then Aunt Quan fried them in oil. And the rest of us sat there and ate them.

Jung ate the sweeten kind, but I preferred the salted kind. Each of us ate one because we could not eat anymore. Besides they were not very digestible. It was late in the night that my mother took me home. That evening I received many more quarters. I was tired that I decided to count them in the morning.

Night passed. And the Birthday of the Dog, the second day of the New Year came along. That day it rained and rained. I could not go out and shoot firecrackers. I decided to stay home from school for one more day. That morning Jung came to called me, but I told him that I did not want to go to school, so he went alone. Even his small brother, Hoi, was staying home too. I noticed that Jung did not wear his new clothes that day.

The day was very dreary and dull. I still wore my new suit and shoes. My amount of money had increased to almost eleven dollars.

It rained all the through the afternoon and the sky grew dark and sullen. I stared out of the window and saw the rain dropping down on the streets. I was glad that I did not go to school that day, because if I did, then I had to walk in the heavy rain and get all wet.

In the afternoon Aunt Quan and Hoi and Uncle Quan came to visit us in our house. Aunt Quan was dressed up in a long Chinese robe and she had her hair combed back and there were many golden jewels sticking in her hair. She had golden earrrings and bracelets. And her face, which was usually rough and brown, was today pink and white. She appeared like a different person and much younger. In this visit I offered tea to her and to uncle with a great deal of formality. In fact, the visit and the talk ~~was~~ were very formal. But New Year's visits ~~are~~ were like that. They were very formal.

Since this was the Birthday of the Dog, it was known as a day of parties. A day in which big and elaborate parties were given by the stores and companies. Even the people themselves gave this elaborate parties.

Aunt Quan and our family were going to attend a big party that night. It was to held in the finest and best restaurant in Chinatown. At seven o'clock Aunt Quan came to call~~ed~~ us. She was in a huge and new automobile which she bought not so long ago. It was of a red color and very attractive to me. My mother, my brother and I were the only one going in our family. My father had to stay home and take care of the small baby.

Arriving at the restaurant, I saw many men and women dressed up in bright colors. Jewels gleamed in the light of the electric lights. Inside in a big and beautiful room, I saw tables covered with pure white tablecloths, which were as white as the snow in a

mountain top. There was a great deal of buzzing and murmuring by the people, like the sound of ocean waves rising and falling, that for a moment I thought I was hearing the sound of the waves.

The party was to be at seven o'clock sharp, but it did not start till about eight. We had to wait for the guests to arrive before we could start. I noticed then that Jung was not around anywhere. I asked Hoi where he was, and he said, "This afternoon he sweared and mother did not let him come. He had to stay home."

I knew how superstitious Aunt Quan was and I knew that if any of her sons did anything during the New Year which was not right, she would surely punish him. It happened that this time it was Jung, and Aunt Quan was more strict with Jung than she was with Hoi. I said to myself that I would talk with Jung tomorrow and cheer him up.

The party was over at about ten o'clock. I drank a great deal of cider during the dinner and I felt very sick that I wished to go home earlier than the others. My mother scolded me on the way home as she had previously warned me not to eat or drink too much. But since I was a little boy, and since this was New Year, and since she was not watching, I drank and I ate my full.

Came the dawn of the third day of the New Year, the Birthday of the Pig. This was not a very important day of the New Year. To me it was, because I had a heavy dose of castor oil given to me. But this was a yearly occurence and I did not care about it.

I did not go to school that day. In the evening I went and visited Jung. He was moody and irritating. I went in his room and he talked to me.

"New Year's celebration makes me sick," he said. "All this fuss and bother are getting to be so monotonous and dull. And those terrible

old customs. They get on my nerves. And people offering money to me. I don't feel like taking them."

"Why, Jung, how could you say all these things? If your mother know about this, she would surely scold you. You know how she is, she believes in the old customs."

"That's just it. She never changes. Every year and everything is just the same as the year before. Your mother changes. So does everyone else's mothers. But my mother is the same all the time. Why, yesterday she locked me in simply because I told Moi to mind his own business and that I think he is a fool. My mother heard it and she locked me in. It's all so foolish and silly. I know your mother wouldn't do it to you if you did that."

I thought awhile and I knew that what Jung said was very true. His mother was really quite strict. I knew that Jung was a very sensative fellow and he was easily hurt by what people said about him. He was very easily hurt.

Opening the door of my house, I heard a voice called to me. "Ming. Ming." I knew it was my mother.

Hurrying up the stairs, I finally reached my room, which was located at the end of the hall. My mother, dressed up in a bright new Chinese robe told me that she was going over to the fortune telling woman to see what the year will bring in happiness and luck. She was going to hand in the names of everyone in our family and in Aunt Quan's family.

She was going to find out whether she had any chance of going back to China this year or not. And whether her luck this year was going to better than last year or worse. I saw on the slip of paper the name Jung. I knew that Jung never believed in such things anyway.

We came to an old woman, living in a dark and empty house. The house was dimly lighted by gas, there was no electric in the house at all, therefore I had a dark and suspicious feeling when I went in with my mother. On the floors in the hallway I saw an earthen god, poorly colored with some bright paint. The god had an ugly expression on the face. Right at the feet of the idol there was a small glass of oil burning slowly, but steadily. In the little box where the idol was resting, I saw on the walls of the box some words brushed in ink on red paper.

The hallway was dark, very dark indeed. There were many doors and all of them looked the same. Suddenly from the far end of the hall, which was still darker than the hall itself, a door slowly opened and a woman with white dirty hair came out and told my mother to go in.

The inside of the room was dark too. It was just a single room. Close to the wall there was a bed very untidy and the sheet evidently had been slept on and turned over again and again without any washing. On the other side right opposite the bed, close to the wall, there was a big table covered with a red oilcloth, which was very dirty. On a little stand which was about a foot high there rested a huge idol painted in gold. This idol had a silent smile resembling the Mona Lisa's smile greatly.

Picking up a round box with many chips or rather bamboo slits in it, the old woman shook it up and down. First she read a name out of the slit of paper that my mother gave to her. And then she mumbled something, what I did not know, and then she shook the box up and down until a single slit fell out of the box. On this slit there was a number and the old woman put that number next to

the name that she spoke out. And on like that until all of the names had a number next to it. When she finished my mother gave her some money in a piece of red paper and we came out of the dreary place into the bright sunlight.

We had paid the old woman for a list of numbers and the next step was to find out in a book to see the meaning under each one of these numbers. As it was night and rather late we could not very well go over to San Francisco to buy one of those books. My mother and I came home late and we went to ~~back.~~ bed

On the Birthday of the Lamb, the fourth day, I went back to school. Jung came and called me and I went with him. I told him that his mother had handed in his name to the fortune telling woman yesterday. He did not answer me and I knew that he was mad at Aunt Quan for doing what she did.

In the evening Aunt Quan and her whole family came over to our house. Jung was along too. I was rather surprised because Jung as a rule rarely went out with his mother. We all gathered together in the living room.

My mother had already hired a man to tell what the numbers meant. This man knew the one hundred numbers of the fortune telling book by heart. He told one number for ten cents each. He told me that I will have lots of luck during the coming year. We had a lot of fun listening ~~to~~ to the man explaining the numbers. Jung was silent all the way through.

Then the man came to Jung's number. He said, "The saying says that Jung should be careful of his health during this coming year. And he should especially watch the automobiles while crossing the streets. His health is threatened by dark shadows." Now when Aunt

Quan heard all this she was very sad. For she believed in this sort of things. And she grew worried and pale. Before Jung went home he said to me, "Ming, you just watch. Nothing is going to happen to me. If my health does get bad it is not because of this numbers, but because it just comes naturally. You know, all of ~~this~~ these sayings ~~is~~ are pure nonsense to me." He went home little caring whether anything happen~~ed~~s to him or not.

I thought awhile after he went. Is all this nonsense or not? I do not know. I remembered a certain man ~~which~~ who had his fortune told. According to the story it was said that the man would come into a great possession of money on a certain day. And many other things. It all came true. Then there was another man who was to suffer from very back luck and the saying said that he will never have a chance to go back to his own land. He did go back and he brought a lot of money with him also. So I did not know whether to believe or not.

That day I received a few more quarters. My total amount of money now was thirteen dollars. And that does not include the dime under my bed pillow.

The Birthday of the Cow came and then passed away without any excitement. However, that day some guests came and visited my mother.

The Birthday of the Horse arrived. I received a few more quarters and a half dollar from a generous friend. I no longer wore my new clothes.

Then the tragic Birthday of Men came. It was raining. It was Sunday. Today we were going to have raw fish and cabbage. This was an old custom which we had been following for many, many years.

When I came downstairs to the kitchen I saw my mother opening the brown pudding. She was going to fry them in the afternoon.

On the kitchen table there were raw fish, decorated with green leaves, and cabbage cut up in thin slices mixed with red carrots, also cut up in thin slices. There was oyster sauce in a very small dish. Inside of a brown paper bag I saw some crisply fried things. What they were, I did not know. There were pepper, salt, and fried small seeds.

I said to my mother, "Are these to be eaten raw?"

"Why, of course."

"But why raw?"

"It's an old custom."

Over in the big stove I saw a big bowl boiling, the steam coming up and disappearing into the thin air. I found out that it was broth. Rice broth cooked with a few pieces of tasty bones.

My mother said, "Those who could not eat the fish raw eat it with the hot broth." I knew that I would be among those who could not eat the fish raw. My mother telephoned over to Aunt Quan's house and invited them over. At two o'clock in the afternoon everybody arrived and we had raw fish to eat. The men folks ate it as though it was nothing at all. The fish appeared red and raw and looked indigestible to me. But the men ate it and really enjoyed it. They swallowed it between gulps of home-made wine.

My mother brought the broth over and she served it to the children and the women. Then we dropped pieces of raw fish into the soup and it tasted good. After the feast I went out in the streets and went over to the store where they were shooting a great deal of firecrackers. We watched for almost an hour and I was sure that the store shot off a lot of firecrackers during that hour. All of the boys went into the pile of burnt crackers to look for

some that perhaps might have refused to come off.

After the end of the shooting our ears began to ring because we had been so close to the firecrackers.

When Jung and I came back to the house my father gave me some firecrackers and he also gave some to Jung to shoot. This was the Birthday of Men and it was the last day for shooting firecrackers. All afternoon we shot firecrackers and we had a grand time.

The afternoon passed away very quickly and soon it was dinner time. In our house we still had the paper mottoes pasted on the walls and the oranges and melon seeds on the table. We did not take them away until after the Birthday of the Robber.

Jung and I went into the sitting room.

He said, "Didn't I tell you that nothing would happen to me? You see, I told you that all those talk was just pure nonsense. I think it is a waste of money to spend it on such foolish things. But my mother is like that."

"New Year is almost over. I suppose you must be glad."

"Sure."

He went over to the table to get some melon seeds. Suddenly I heard dishes and glass being broken. I turned around and there was Jung gathering up the broken pieces of glassware. I saw that he was afraid as Aunt Quan came into the room. For a moment nobody spoke. Then in a small quiet voice Jung said, "I didn't mean it. I guess I must have pull the tablecloth without knowing it."

Aunt Quan immideiately took him home. I heard my mother saying, "It's a bad sign. Broking dishes on the Birthday of Men. Very bad. This morning Aunt Quan told me that she break an electric light globe and she was so worried as it was an ill omen."

That night I counted my money. I had altogether about fifteen dollars. My mother told me to put it in the bank next week.

And the dawn of the Birthday of the Wheat came.

Jung had caught sick so I was told. That day I went over to see him. He seemed very cheerful even though he was a little pale. His sickness was brought about because of all the fancy and oily foods that he ate during the entire week. He said to me, "I know what my mother is thinking now. She is going to blame all this on what I did at your house yesterday and what the man said about my number."

To comfort him I said, "Sure, you'll get well soon. I know that all those foolish beliefs have nothing to do with your illness." I told him that I was going to see him tomorrow.

My mother asked me how Jung was and I told her that he was all right except that he was a little pale. That night my mother went over to visit him. She ~~thought~~ thought that what he did yesterday was the cause of his sickness.

Aunt Quan told my mother that it was a bad sigh when she break that electric light globe. She told my mother that she did not even dare tell Uncle Quan about it, even though uncle did not believe in such foolish things.

The next day, the Birthday of the Soldier came along. I went over to Jung's house and I saw a doctor there. Aunt Quan told me that Jung had a fever last night. It was a bad fever, she told me. Jung was asleep so I did not talk to him that day.

Aunt Quan told me that the doctor told her that Jung's heart was very weak and he told her to send the boy to the hospital as soon as possible. But she did not want to do it because she did not believe the doctor.

In the afternnon Jung complained that he had a sore throat. The doctor came and said that he had diptheria and that his heart was very weak. But still Aunt Quan thought that perhaps in a day or two the sickness would pass away. She said that Jung was such a strong boy that he could get well from any sickness with ease.

It was late in the night almost about ten o'clock that the telephone rang. Aunt Quan sounded very excited over the phone. My mother told me to phone over to the doctor and tell him to come over to see Jung. My mother then took me over to the house and I saw that the doctor had arrived before I. It was ~~too~~ quite late. Jung moved suddenly. Aunt Quan was sobbing. But Jung was still alive. He tried to talk but was unable. His pale face was still and thin. The doctor wanted to send the patient over to the hospital. But Aunt Quan did not let him. S he was going to called in a Chinese doctor the next morning and ~~the~~ she did not want to have Jung away.

The doctor told my mother that perhaps the boy might die, so weak was his heart. He tried to tell Aunt Quan but Aunt Quan would not believe him. He went away.

That night while I was in bed I worried about Jung. He looked very weak, indeed. And then the Birthday of the Robber dawned. Before I was up, I heard the telephone rang. My mother made me get up in a hurry. Jung was getting worse. He acted very strangely so my aunt told my mother over the phone. I had to phone the doctor again. I told him to hurry because it was emergency. He came to Jung's house before we arrived there. When we arrived we heard Aunt's Quan crying in a loud voice. Jung died very suddenly she told my mother. And she sobbed and cried and moaned.

The doctor went back to his office as he could not do anything.

The Birthday of the Robber was a tragic day for Aunt Quan. All through the day she at the bedside of Jung and chanted a peculiar song. I could not stand it because it was wailing and sad and I came home with mother.

That day I counted my money and I had altogether about fifteen dollars. I used some of the money and bought a ~~much~~ bunch of flowers and I brought it over to Aunt Quan. She was silent and she gave me a dime wrapped in a piece of white paper and also a piece of brown sugar wrapped in a piece of white paper. I came home.

Now the New Year was officially over. And the tragic death of Jung threw all of us in sad and moody appearance. And once in awhile in the days that followed I heard Aunt Quan telling to her friends about Jung breaking the dishes on the Birthday of Men, and about the saying told by the old man, and how she break an electric light globe on the morning of the seventh day of the year.

And the old folks, very old, who were almost ready for the grave, said that it was inevitable. It was very bad to break anything on the Birthday of Men. Aunt Quan really believed that the cause of Jung's death was inevitable. She said why ~~it is~~ was it that everything came out as supposed to happen. It could not be coincidence that Jung should break things of the seventh day and she to broke a globe, and the true saying of the old man.

I missed Jung. In school and in my spare time I thought of him. I remembered what he said. "Nothing will happen to me, you see."

But it did happen and I did not whether it was fate that caused his death or else it was brought about because of things that happened to him in the New Year.

I only know that I missed my friend, Jung, very much.

Jon Lee rewrite

The Strange Woman

How well I remember her, this strange woman of Chinatown.

And although she is but only a distant memory now, I can visualize her ~~once~~ more, and seeing ~~again~~ her (in all her) strangeness and with all her (those) peculiarities, ~~which are so familiar to everyone~~ (in Chinatown knew.) ~~who knows her.~~ I was a boy then ~~and she seemed to have been~~ Yes, she is gone from this scene, this life that surges around ~~me,~~ (deeply swallowed up) but I hear her name mentioned frequently by the (women) workers in the ~~store,~~ (shop) ~~and~~ Everytime that she is mentioned, I ~~can~~ am be sure to learn ~~some~~ (a few more) new facts about her life and habits, for she was one (person about) whom the workers (in the shop) never tire of talking.

She was indeed ~~a strange woman~~ (peculiar), perhaps the strangest ~~one~~ (woman) that ever roamed the street of Chinatown. (As I think of her I recall) ~~How~~ clearly ~~I see~~ (we) again the way she (used to) walk~~s~~, the clothes she ~~wears~~ (wore), the ~~way~~ (manner) ~~she mutters as she goes around~~ (in which she used to wander about) the town, muttering to herself.

~~She used to walk in~~ (It was her custom to walk through) the streets of Chinatown, dressed up in a ~~very~~ (most) fantastic and conspicuous costume, ~~which~~ consisting of a large red cloth ~~which she~~ tied around her head, a dark woolen cloak of blue wool ~~which~~ hung loosely on her stout body, (and wearing) a pair of odd looking slippers of a dark red color. On rainy days she did not wear the red cloth ~~of~~ (on) her head. (Then) She wore a large straw hat, flat and wide, shaped like a pancake with a pyramid effect in the middle. Whenever she walked on the street people stared at her, even though she had been coming and going ~~in~~ (all over) Chinatown for many years. She never walked on the sidewalks ~~since she~~ preferred ~~to wander~~ (ing instead to walk in the middle) ~~of~~ the street where the automobiles rushed by, (She paid no attention to them,) looking neither to the

And now although these many years I have not seen her, I can still see her as distinctly as if she were here right now. I can still remember that day when I first came to know her, that day when I first saw her strange face peering directly into mine.

Insert p. 7, after line 11

I was a little boy then, hardly ten years old. Many times I had heard my mother talking of "crazy Choy," for that was the name they by which she was called. the strange woman by. In fact, whenever I or any of my brothers or sisters disobeyed our elders, mother would say to us, "You better be good, or I shall call "crazy Choy" into the house." Then, instantly, we would become quiet, for the name of the poor crazy woman had a sort brought of terror to all of us.

I remember so vividly the day the strange woman first came to our house. It was the first day of the New Year, that she first and She came to our shop with the shrimp woman, to visit my mother. When she As soon as we saw her enter we came into the house all of us children immediately hid ourselves from view, but we all gazed out from holes peeped through the cracks in the walls to get a good look at the strange woman her. Almost continuously she shook her head back and forth, peeking ed into corners and dark hallways, muttering and mumbled to herself. The whole throughout the time that she stayed at the house, she never sat still, once but got up repeatedly to She kept on looking into the dark hallways, as searching for something. to see. This fear of the dark and this peering into the hallways whenever she came into a house was something she developed only after a mind-shattering experience. She

(so my mother told me)

Mother told me afterwards that since the day the strange woman was frightened by the man in the dark, she had always been terrified of darkness, and wherever she went, she always looked into dark hallways to see if there was a man there. wished to be certain that no man was lurking in the shadows of the hallways.

From the day the strange woman came to our house, I had never forgotten her. It was after this visit that I paid more attention to her for I could not get her out of my mind. Then as the years went by, and I began to grow up, I saw her more often roaming the streets of Chinatown, I would see her frequently roaming the streets of Always her head was tied with a large red cloth. tied around her head

It never occurred to me

At that time I never knew that, someday, I would be living down at the store shop, and that the strange woman was going to she would be one of our the employees. there

left nor right, just walking, her brown face reminding one of an old witch. Her hair ~~were~~ was never combed, and spreading out over ~~to~~ her face from under the red cloth, ~~giving her~~ producing a weird and ~~sem~~ frightening effect.

5 ~~This strange woman~~ She could not speak, and her only resemblence to human talk ~~were those strange audible sounds she muttered~~ nearest approach of which she seemed capable were ~~almost~~ unceasingly. Always her mouth moved, her face twitched in ~~gr~~ grostesque shapes, and her head ~~shaking~~ bobbed back and forth ~~while~~ always as she muttered the ~~se~~ strange sounds ~~from her mouth~~. She was a human being, 10 a woman, ~~but was~~ yet seemed more like a wild creature, in fact, like a witch of the old~~en~~ 11 days.

12 ~~The strangest~~ Now the most peculiar thing about her was the way she loved to play with water. She used a great quantit~~y~~ities of water, playing with it all night long, splashing it all over the room and floor. ~~No one had ever been~~ yet was able to explain why she did it.

I ~~saw~~ used to see her often at the Seventh Street Park, ~~obtaining~~ getting water from the small drinking fountain, filling the small cup which she held in her hand, and emptying cupful ~~and~~ after cupful ~~until~~ into the pail until it was full. It was slow tedious work, but she went about it patiently, and when the pail was filled, she carried it slowly home, her whole body slant~~ed~~ing to one side by the heavy load of water, walking very carefully to avoid spilling any of it. She made at least two or three trips a day to the park, sometimes more, and always for only one reason, to get water. No one who saw her ever bothered her, but ~~one~~ simply would ~~###~~ watched her with unbelievable eyes.

She carried the water back to ~~an~~ the old house which she occupied with another old woman. The two of them lived alone; ~~and~~ both were very ~~strange~~ peculiar women.

Often I ~~had~~ passed by their house, and, looking up, I would see the two of them sunning themselves near the open window. They were such an odd couple, so ~~strange~~ foreign and so far apart from the rest of the living world. When I saw ~~the strange woman~~ her looking listlessly toward the horizon, her eyes unmoved and still, I often wondered ~~is~~ (for I knew her story then - whether) she was thinking of the days when she was a young and beautiful girl ~~and how~~ of the tragedy ~~in~~ which had so transformed! (and ended in her becoming this unbelievable) her life ~~changed her from a bright young girl into a~~ wilted ~~and~~ old woman.

~~Could it be possible that she~~ (I wondered then whether she) might still have ~~a slight~~ some faint remembrance of that day in China, so long ago, when she was kidnapped by a group of men who sold her and trained her for a life of ~~torture~~ shame and hardship? ~~Could~~ Was it be possible that beneath ~~that~~ this wild face and figure that there was still a spark of sanity left? ~~No one knows, not even this strange woman herself.~~

The story of her life ~~is so fantastic and strange that~~ as it was gradually revealed to me is so incredible and out of this world that, it is almost unbelievable. ~~What I have been able to learn of her proves definitely to me that truth is stranger than fiction.~~

~~Her~~ This story had its beginning a little over forty years ago back in China, back in the days when girls were captured or kidnapped and sold to people who made it their business to train ~~these girls for a lewd and licentious life.~~ them for a life of prostitution.

~~The strange woman, when~~ She was ~~a~~ but a little girl, ~~became a victim in the hands of kidnappers. At that time she was~~ at the time, when she was seized by these kidnappers about six or seven years of age, ~~They kidnappers~~ sneaked her into this country and sold her to a woman for a large amount of

money. From that moment on the girl was taught to be a ~~toy~~ plaything for men, and there was nothing that she could do to avoid participating in this life of vice and ~~pleasure~~ sensuality.

The years went by, and when the girl was old enough to make money, the woman who had bought her from the kidnappers became her manager, and she took the girl to different cities where she became a great ~~joy to men who~~ favorite. Men adored her. There was one who became so infatuated with her that he wanted ~~ardently~~ desperately to ~~possess~~ keep her for ~~his very~~ himself own. Much as the girl ~~wished~~ wished it, yet it ~~cannot be so~~ could not be done, for she was in the control and under the management of the woman.

The young man ~~had~~ then lost all control of himself, ~~striving~~ so desperately ~~to get~~ crazy was he to have the girl for himself, and one night unable to suppress his desire, he waited outside the doorway for the girl to come back. He hid himself in the shadows of the building, patiently waiting, and holding a gun in his hand, ~~eagerly hoping to accomplish what he set out to do~~ to force his will upon her. Late that evening the young girl came home alone. She was opening the door ~~when~~ as she caught a fleeting glimpse of a dark shadow behind her. Turning around suddenly, she saw ~~the~~ her young admirer. He caught hold of her and held ~~and held~~ her tightly.

"You must come with me," he said, "with me alone. I cannot go on without you." The girl was frightened, but she managed to say, "I should like to go with you, but I cannot leave the woman who takes care of me. If you want me, you must go to her and settle on a price. That is the only way."

Taking the gun out ~~from~~ of his pocket, the man forced him-

self into the house. He realized that the manager of the girl would never consent to sell the young girl to him.

Frightened, and dazed, ~~the girl~~ she watched the man take all her clothes and jewels away. So sudden had the man pulled the gun on her that she became terrified, and while the man robbed her of all her belongings, she stood there ~~in~~ numb with terror, her eyes wide ~~with~~ open in fear.

~~It~~ And it was thus they found her the next morning, sobbing loudly, her clothes ~~all~~ torn and disarranged. Her eyes ~~held~~ had a dead and hollow look. Still terrified by what happened the night before, she told her story.

From that day on a great change came over her. The ~~incident~~ memory of that frightful night ~~had somehow~~ lingered on in her mind, and she was ~~not~~ unable to forget it. She grew listless, and ~~She~~ avoided men. She remained by herself all the time ~~always~~. Then, as the days passed by, she lost her voice, and was unable to speak anymore except to make noises like an animal. She paid no more attention to her personal appearance, avoiding all makeup which she once used so effectively in luring men ~~to~~ ~~her~~. To all appearances, she was like a wild ~~maniac because she robed her-~~ person. She dressed self in the est odd looking clothes. ~~She was a faded flower who no longer had the satin smoothness of youth. At this time~~ Her youth faded. Shortly after, the manager left her, and she, the strange woman, was left alone without funds or shelter for the future. Alone, forgotten, no longer a fascination to men ~~who~~ once used to adore her, she wandered, forsaken, ~~in the loneliness of~~ in the streets, without a home, without any money. Fortunately, at this time, the wife of the boss who used to own the store in which we now live ~~in~~, had pity

on ~~this lonely woman~~ her. She took her into her spacious house and cared for her. In return, for this kindness, the strange woman helped ~~the kind woman~~ her with her work, ~~and in this way~~ Thus many years in ~~the~~ her life ~~of the strange woman~~ rolled ~~passed~~ by.

Daily she delivered shrimps to housewives who worked at home, and were unable to come to the store to get ~~the shrimps~~ them themselves. When she ~~finished~~ had delivering shrimps, she ~~sat~~ would sit at the long table picking ~~shrimps~~ them to ~~earing~~ some money for herself. In this fashion she managed to make from fifteen to twenty cents in seven or eight hours. ~~work.~~ For the other work she did, ~~the strange woman got~~ she received no money in return, but the kind ~~wife brought~~ woman who took her in ~~bought~~ clothes for her, and let her ~~eat~~ have her meals free. ~~Also she was given~~ And so she found shelter, and food and, for a while, found contentment and peace ~~the strange woman lived there content and without any worries at all.~~ of mind

However, ~~the strange woman could not~~ she was not destined to stay ~~long~~ at the store. It was ~~at~~ just about this time that she began to ~~have her~~ develop the peculiar habit of playing with water. ~~After~~ She would wait until everyone in the house had gone to bed, ~~she would~~ and then quietly sneak out into the kitchen, and ~~then, going~~ from there into the ~~bedroom~~ bath, ~~she~~ ~~quietly~~ open the faucet and let the water run until the tub was full. Then gathering all ~~the~~ shoes she could get hold of, she would threw them into the tub, splash- ~~ing~~ them in the water, churning the water with her bare hands. So quietly did she do all this, that it was not until the water bills began to ~~come in~~ mount ~~did~~ that ~~the wife know about the strange~~ woman who had taken her in found out about it. ~~habit of the woman.~~ She forbad her ~~warned the strange woman not to con-~~ doing it again ~~tinue with it,~~ but it was of no avail.

~~Soon it~~ It soon became necessary to make her move. Much as she hated to throw her out of the house, the ~~kind wife~~ owner had to do it,

for she knew that the ~~continuous rise~~ mounting of water bills ~~was~~ were more than she could afford to pay. But where was ~~the strange~~ this poor woman ~~to go~~ to be placed? One could not simply abandon her. The solution of this problem came easily, fortunately.

~~At this time~~ Just then there was an old woman living alone in a broken-down house. The rent was more than she could afford, since she lived there alone, and she wished to ~~have~~ rent some of the rooms ~~rented~~ to help her pay the rent. The kind ~~wife~~ woman who found it necessary to put her out land then! rented a room in this house, ~~and~~ the strange woman went ~~there~~ to live. The very first day that she went there she began ~~to~~ play ing with water. ~~That~~ At night she ~~took~~ would take pails of water to her room, and ~~all night long she~~ played with the water continuously, splashing the ~~water~~ it all over the floor. The next morning, ~~her~~ the old ~~com-panion~~ woman found her there, sleeping on the wet floor. She became terrified, and she quick~~ly~~ notified the kind ~~wife of the matter.~~ woman who had rented the room. ~~The kind wife said to her,~~ But the latter reassured her and said, "You ~~have nothing to~~ need not worry about her. She ~~only~~ only plays with the water at night, so Every night ~~you~~ lock your kitchen so that she will not be able to get in."

This the old woman did, but it did not stop the strange woman from getting water. She ~~went across~~ simply crossed the street to the park, and there ~~she~~ got her water with no one to bother her. ~~Each~~ Every day she ~~made~~ would make numerous ~~trips~~ to the park, ~~bringing~~ and bring back enough water to play with ~~each~~ at night. Days, months, ~~glided~~ glided into years. ~~Still~~ But it produced no change in her routine of life. She continued ~~the strange woman went about her life of monotony, happy in her pleasure of~~ playing with water, and was happy.

~~In the~~ Every morning she ~~went~~ would go to the store to pick shrimps, ~~earning~~ and her twenty cents daily. ~~In the~~ Every night she played with her water, ~~playing~~ played with it regularly until she ~~fell~~ either fell asleep, or ~~until she~~ was too tired to go on.

She was a very slow worker, and all the time that she was ~~working~~ worked, she ~~muttered and hummed~~ kept on muttering and humming to herself, ~~attering~~ and loud ~~but~~ and indistinct sounds ~~to herself~~ would come from her throat. Whenever anyone of the workers talked to her, she did not answer, but ~~she went~~ just kept on ~~with her~~ muttering and humming. But she could understand what people ~~say~~ other said, ~~although ###~~ but she could not make others understand what she herself ~~is~~ was trying to say.

On rainy days when it was too difficult for her to stand the tedious work of getting water from the drinking fountain in the park, she came to the store fof water. The ~~kind~~ owner wife always gave it to her, for she did not come often.

~~Thus, in a monotonous way~~ Years her life went by. She never went anywhere since that awful and unforgettable night. She had ~~but~~ a few personal friends, but none of them ever went to see her in that old house.

As the years went by, the strange woman was getting old. ~~Her~~ She was now a fairly old woman, with a face ~~became~~ dry and sallow, ~~her body lean and bony. She had~~ and a thin body consisting just of ones, ~~was but~~ a shell of her former self. ~~At this time~~ She began to complain~~d~~ about aches and pains ~~on~~ in her hips and her spine. Despite the advice of everyone, she refused to see a doctor, ~~She~~ but doctored herself with goose quills and ~~strange~~ special ointments ~~with~~ that had a very disagreeable odor. Everyone ~~was completely~~ who approached her would become nauseated by the

And now comes the strangest episode in that strange life. She was asked

terrible foul ~~air~~ odor that ~~lingered on~~ adhered to her body. ~~However, she did get well~~ After many months of illness, however, she got well.

~~Strangely enough, at this time she was asked~~ in marriage by a poor old man who ~~desired~~ needed a wife. The poor man had heard of her, and one day he came to the ~~store~~ shrimp shop and asked the ~~kind~~ woman who had ~~wife~~ been so kind to her to arrange a marriage between himself and the ~~strange~~ is deranged woman.

"I know that she is not ~~what~~ like others ~~are~~ women," he said, "but I only want one who will cook my meals and mend my clothes. I do not desire more." When told that the ~~strange~~ is woman had many peculiar habits, the man said, "It does not matter, for I am old and lonely."

And so The marriage was arranged quietly. The first night of the marriage proved however, ~~immediately brought about their~~ to be the separation of them both. Late that night proved the last. when the husband was asleep, his wife the strange woman crept toward him with a large kitchen knife in her hand. Just when ~~she~~ as she was about to strike ~~the~~ him a death-blow, he suddenly woke up. Terrified at the ~~strange behavior~~ sight of his wife, ~~and her appearance~~ ~~he went~~ with the butcher knife in her hand he rushed screaming out of the house, and ~~he~~ went straight to the ~~store~~ shop where ~~he told the kind wife of~~ to tell the proprietor what had happened.

"Let this marriage come to an end immediately," he said, "I have had enough of it."

And So the marriage was ended, and the ~~strange~~ woman went back to the house to live with the old ~~old~~ woman. There she continued ~~to play~~ playing with her water ~~each~~ every night, happy in her freedom once more.

Since the night of that short marriage, she has become even more ~~became~~ terrified at the ~~more~~ sight of a man. Whenever she ~~saw~~ spies one, she cringes and

back with fright, her whole body tense, her eyes wide with an undescribable ~~horror.~~ terror in them.

~~Soon it was found necessary for the kind wife to sell the store.~~ Time passed on and, finally, the owner of the shrimp-shop had to sell it.

When we moved into the ~~store~~ shop with my uncle, the ~~strange~~ woman was there, sitting near the table, picking ~~her~~ shrimps. Soon we had to tell her to work at home, for the children were afraid of her. ~~So~~ That meant that every day, shrimps were ~~then~~ delivered to her home, and she brought them back when she was finished ~~them~~ with her work. Once in awhile she came to the ~~store~~ shop to get water, ~~and~~ My mother always gave it to her.

For awhile ~~she went on thus.~~ things continued like this. Then the old woman with whom she was living ~~with~~ died, and ~~the~~ again, she ~~strange woman~~ was left alone. The ~~kind wife~~ woman who had protected her ~~had~~ moved into the country, and so her best and kindest friend was gone. ~~Many people had pity on this strange woman, to see her so~~ But, then, fortunately a number of people took pity on her plight, lonely and forgotten in the town. So They took it upon themselves to see that ~~this~~ she ~~strange woman is~~ was given a home and taken care of. They arranged for her to go ~~the~~ to a home ~~of~~ for the aged. ~~By sheer force~~ She ~~was~~ had to be put into an automobile and taken there. That is, many years ~~had~~ ago gone ~~by, and~~ What she is doing there today no one knows. None of her friends ever go to see her. ~~Without a doubt she is alone and apart from everyone there.~~

~~Yes, these many years~~ she ~~is~~ gone, and a once ~~familiar sight of~~ Chinatown is lost. ~~Whenever I think back of the strange woman,~~ I ~~often~~ wonder ~~to myself~~ whether she still has water to play with or not.

And as I think of her

Jon Lee rewrite

The Man who wished to be a King.

~~A Peculiar Man~~

Every other Sunday He comes to the store, and immediately He goes to work, sweeping the floor in his ~~regular~~ methodical slow way, his odd looking shoes clicking loudly on the wooden floor. It takes him two hours to sweep the entire house, and two hours to wash every room. ~~He comes every other Sunday to earn~~ For this he gets his seventy-five cents. ~~and~~ He always stays for the evening dinner, and goes home about nine o'clock. He is a very peculiar man, strange in talk and strange in action. His face ~~possesses~~ has a strange childlike quality, giving him actually the appearance of being stupid. Small round holes cover his face in great profusion, ~~spreading~~ and extend over ~~to~~ his neck and shoulders. He wears a black cap which is hardly large enough to cover ~~the~~ his dirty hair ~~which~~ that falls in ~~wild confusion~~ unkempt down to his neck. But the strangest thing about him ~~has~~ are his shoes. They are large, heavy looking objects, hard to describe. ~~The~~ They shoes have no buttons or shoe-laces, and every time he walks, his feet ~~could~~ slip out ~~from the spacious shoes~~, and I can see ~~the~~ ~~his~~ one a blue cotton sock with a large hole in the heel. The color of the shoes is a blend between light black and dirty mud-brown ~~suede.~~

I have seen him ~~walking~~ again and again walking in the streets of Chinatown, always wearing the same clothes, his coat-pockets bulging out with large packages wrapped in old newspapers. The first time that I saw him, I wondered who he was, and why he went around town, dressed in such a peculiar way. I never expected to know him personally. But one ~~he is until~~ the day when he came into the store and asked for work to do.

I remember it very well. It was on a Sunday and he was ~~that he came into the store,~~ dressed in the same clothes I had seen him wear ~~he had worn~~ for so long a time. I asked him what he wished, and he said, "I want some work to do, and I'll ~~shall~~ do it for you at a cheap price."

He spoke in a dialect which was hard to understand. ~~and~~ Only by straining my ears was I able to understand even part of what he said. I was in fact so interested in the way he dressed that I had a hard time getting myself to listen~~ing~~ to him. He had on a loose fitting suit of a dull gray ~~#~~ color with horizontal lines of a lighter shade running across it.

Then he said ~~to him~~, "I don't know what there is for you to do." But he remained standing in the store, refusing to go away.

At this moment my mother came ~~out~~ in and she asked him, "What do you wish?"

"This man wants work to do," I interrupted. ~~said to my mother.~~

Mother looked at the man for awhile, studying him, startled at his strange appearance.

"What is your price for work?" she demanded.

"Anything you give me; I will ~~shall~~ take anything willingly," the man answered.

"All right then," mother said, "sweep the rooms and, after you finish that, wash the floors."

As I watched him walking slowly across the floor, his loose fitting shoes clicking on the floor, I had grave doubts as to his ability to work. Watching him ~~work~~, I expected, at any moment, to see his shoes drop off ~~out~~.

He worked hard all afternoon, dusting the tables and chairs, sweeping the floors and burning old papers. He was a hard worker,

but he worked very slowly. It took him ~~to~~ two whole hours to sweep every room in the house, and two more hours to wash the floor, but, when he was finished, the whole house was spotlessly clean.

While he was working, he ~~picked up~~ found a copper penny in one of the rooms, ~~and~~ He ~~took the penny out~~ brought it to me and said, "I picked this up in one of the bedrooms." For a moment I was surprised at this childlike simplicity. But I ~~guessed~~ imagined he did it because he was honest rather than stupid.

"You can keep it," I told him.

He gave a little smile, and put the penny in his pocket. Not long after this, he came out again with another penny in his hand.

"I found this in one of the rooms, too," he said.

"You can keep any money you find from now on," I told him. He smiled again, and put that penny in his pocket, going back to work, his loud shoes making a ~~enormous~~ tremendous noise.

Afterward I told everyone in the house about what happened and mother said, "He is a very peculiar man."

When he was finished with his work, it was time for dinner and mother asked him to stay.

He sat down at the table with all of us without removing his cap, ~~eating~~ and ate his rice quickly, silently, ~~and~~ we all ~~of us~~ watched him, laughing silently, to ourselves, exactly why we did not know except that he was so strange. He sat there eating his rice, not daring to pick up any chicken or meat from the bowls with his chopsticks. Then my mother said, "Please, don't be too polite. Just ~~get~~ take what you want from the table." Then he picked up a piece of

meat and chicken and ate them with his rice. Mother had to remind him many times to do this or he would have continued to eat his rice plainly.

After dinner mother asked him, "How much do you want for your work?"

He said, "Anything will be all right."

For a moment she hestitated, not knowing how much to give him. Then she took out seventy-five cents and gave it to him.

"Do you want me to come again?" he asked before leaving.

"Come again every other Sunday," mother said to him. After he was out in the street, all of us broke into hearty laughter, unable to control ourselves.

From that time on, every other Sunday, he came to the store, regularly. And always he wore the same clothing, never once changing anything on his body.

After a while I decided to learn more about him and his life. What I discovered was this.

He was unemployed. The only work he did was to run errands for a few busy housewives, and odd jobs which he got now and then, such as cleaning floors and windows. Although he had a great deal of time, he always gave everyone the impression that he was busy. Whenever a worker in the store asked him, "How are you getting along?" he always answered, "I am so busy at the cannery that I have no time to think of anything else."

Once, in a jesting mood, a worker asked him, "Why do you not buy another pair of shoes? Yours are so old and worn out."

"Someday, when I have time, I will go up town and buy myself a pair," he said.

All ~~of~~ the workers in the store ~~would~~ laugh (quietly at this) ~~secretly~~, for they knew that he had no money to buy shoes.

He (all used to poke fun at him and once we said,) ~~make fun of him often by saying~~, "You know, you are still a young man." (At this) ~~He smiled then~~, his whole face (covered) ~~grinning~~ with a grin. ~~with laughter~~.

(But now to) ~~The~~ story of his life. (It was) ~~It was~~ as strange as the man himself.

~~We~~ I found out from a reliable source that (throughout) ~~all~~ his life ~~he had a~~ his one strong desire (and passion was) to become a king, ~~and this~~ (so strong was this) desire ~~was~~ so strong in him that it became an ~~haunting~~ obsession (dominating) ~~in~~ his whole mind. (It was said that) ~~When~~ he came over to America to study, he became interested in world politics, and ~~he~~ decided to ~~be~~ (make himself) prominent in ~~the~~ world affairs ~~of the world~~, and ~~striving eagerly, he worked toward this end~~ and that everything he did was with this end in view. But his greatest desire ~~is~~ was to become a king, ~~and~~ Even when China became a republic, he did not give up this fantastic idea. Gradually his whole mind suffered ~~when~~ as he (began to) realized how futile and hopeless it was for him to reach his goal. ~~Suffering a great shock at~~ His disappointment of not being able to be a king, (was so great that) he became slightly deranged and ~~in his mental attitude.~~ Slowly, but steadily, his whole personality changed until today he is one of the strangest men in Chinatown. Such, in brief, is what I learned.

One of the strangest habits of (this strange man) ~~his~~ is that he eats ~~no~~ rice at home (only irregularly), that is, ~~he eats it irregularly,~~ since noodles ~~are~~ is his favorite (dish is noodles. He cooks his) ~~meal. He cooks the~~ rice in a very strange manner. (This is what he does. First he takes) ~~The first thing he does in preparing his meal is to take~~ three large bowlfuls of rice and wash them clean. (Then) ~~After that is finished,~~ he takes out two cups of oil ~~which are~~ and pours (this) into the rice ~~with~~ (to which has been added) two large pieces of finely chopped

ham. Out of this strange combination, he manages to cook the meal he likes. He eats his rice, likewise, in every peculiar manner. It first, is placed on a large tin pan, Then holding two chopsticks in his hand, he begins his meal. He always follows the dish of rice with a cup of strong tea in which has been melted a piece of brown sugar. Then another dish of rice, and then another cup of sweet tea, etc.

When the man is calm, he is like a meek, lamb, gentle, and peaceful. But when he is angry, then it is best to keep away from him. In these moments of anger, he seems to acquire great strength which he is unable to control. Instead of the gentle, stupid person that he looks like, he becomes a being terrifying in appearance.

One of the most peculiar things about him, apart from his odd looking shoes, is his habit of carrying old cans in his coat-pockets. These cans are wrapped in thick layers of old newspaper, and never shown to anyone.

I have often wondered what was in the cans, and once, I had the courage to ask him. "Tell me" I said, "Why do you carry these cans around?"

But he made no answer. However I was given an explanation from a person who had, in turn, another person heard it from this man's story. According to it was rumored that he was afraid of fire in the house where he lived. Now he owned many remarkable herbs which he prized highly and guarded with great care. The only safe way to protect them, he felt, was to carry them with him all the time. Whether he eats these herbs or not no one knows. This is, however, a story which has never been verified, The man himself never has spoken about the matter.

I know, however, that he collects certain things, namely

pictures of (beautiful) girls. Many times he brings ought (these) pictures of girls to the store, and I would ask him, "Which of these girls do you like best?" and then he would scrutinize each picture carefully, and, finally, choose that of choosing the one that is the youngest and prettiest. And I would then say, "No, that one is not pretty, look at this one," pointing to the ugliest one I could find. And so I tease and argue with him for no reason at all except for a merry laugh.

(freely about one thing only,) He is always talking about politics, and the battleships that are due in San Francisco Bay at any time. Sometimes (he discourses) for hours at a time, he would talk about world affairs, of news (always matters, however,) that are at least ten years old. All of us like to listen to him talk, because, despite the nonsense he talks us utters, there is a peculiar fascination in his weird (conversation) stories. In order to encourage him, we often say, "Tell us some more, you tell such good stories." your talk is excellent And he would continues on with his endless stream of (talk and) nonsense.

People often say to him (tease) (about the battleships.) "The battleships are due in the bay very soon. You must prepare yourself to meet them." (Then,) For the next a few days and night, he locks himself in his room, busily drawing pictures of battleships, writing endlessly (on his plans) his method of war on with other nations. (these drawings and plans,) Day and night he labors on, never stopping, never taking time out to sleep. When he (is) finished, and we ask him, "Can people say to him, "Will you let me (we) see what you have drawn and written?" he always gives us the same answer, "After I have shown my work to the government officials officers, (then) I shall let you see them." But never has he shown them to anyone.

Frequently he has been fooled by those who jest him. When he goes to San Francisco and the battleships are not

(cf p. 8, lines 3-17)

there, he says, "Well, I can show them the next time they come."

3 He lives in an old house, ~~but~~ where he does not have to pay any rent. He helps his landlord clean the house, and ~~he lives in the house free of charge.~~ gets his room free, in payment for his work. ~~Right now, he~~ (As I said before he) has no regular job, but ~~he does irregular work~~ works at irregular intervals, all over the town, and sometimes ~~making~~ as much as two dollars a day. ~~He is a energetic worker, but very slow.~~ He has a father who lives over in the city, but he never goes to see him. I am told that his father ~~tells~~ wants him to ~~come~~ come and live with him, but ~~the man~~ he does not want to. He also has a wife in China ~~who is still alive~~.

"Why don't you go back to China?" I said to him (on one occasion) ~~once~~.

~~And~~ But he shook his head (and answered) ~~saying~~, "No, I do not wish to go back." He would ~~not tell his~~ give no reasons for not wishing to return to his homeland. ~~He~~ (And so he) lives alone. He does not buy any new clothes; he does not have to pay rent. The occasional money he earns is enough to keep him alive.

17 ~~And for the~~ last year or so, particularly, as comes to the stone ~~he has been coming in every other Sunday, always~~ (on alternate Sundays, still) wearing the same clothes, ~~and~~ he has been talking ~~of his desire~~ incessantly about this one desire of his, to become a king.

~~And~~ As I watching him work, (in his slow, methodical way) I remember ~~that~~ someone (once) said to him once, "When I go back to China, I shall give you a position as a king in my court." ~~And~~ I remember his answer given in ~~that~~ his peculiar dialect, "Yes, that will be fine. But let us wait until the time comes ~~to~~ (before we) discuss it."

~~In this he goes on, never able to reach his goal, that of being a king.~~

~~And every other Sunday~~ (as) I watch him, ~~and I know then that this is indeed a strange world.~~

But ~~he~~ throughout all these years he has never forgotten the his one dominant passion, to become a king. During

transfer to p. 7 after line 4

Jon Lee new material

The Man who ~~Hates~~ Disliked Work

(Hsiang-ju) ~~He~~ never works unless it is absolutely necessary. ~~for him to do so.~~ For the last four years he has averaged about five months ~~of work~~ per year, and what he earns during this time is just enough for him to live on throughout the year.

He is a short man with a dark brown face, almost like that of a Mexican, very long black hair, and small eyes which seem to twinkle all the time. Although he is thirty years old and looks it, there are times when he gives the impression of great youthfulness. He is not good looking; ~~and~~ his features are scrawny and irregular; he has an odd ~~His~~ built ~~is of odd proportion~~, and yet there is ~~that~~ a certain something about him that gives him the impression of great youthfulness. Perhaps it is the peculiar grin on his face that makes him look young. He has a strange habit of grinning to himself when he is alone, ~~and his~~ the reason for ~~doing so~~ which no one has ever found out.

He wears ~~only~~ the cheapest clothes ~~that~~ he can buy, choosing dull dark shades such as dark-blue, black, and muddy brown colors. ~~The styles of~~ His clothes are of such a peculiar ~~material~~ type and ~~made~~ cut in such an odd ~~ways~~ fashion that his ~~whole~~ person is inconspicuous, despite the fact that his clothes themselves are extremely conspicuous, ~~for their oddness~~. He walks with the upper part of his body leaning forward, his legs wide apart. He ~~always~~ wears heavy army-shoes, and heavy wool stockings.

~~His~~ He has the ~~strangest~~ habit ~~of~~ of sitting ~~to sit~~ for hours alone, grinning

and smiling at regular intervals. ~~Whenever he does that, one~~ Sometimes as we see him with this grin on his face, one of us would ask him, "What is so funny ~~that~~ which makes you grin?" (Such a question) (it that is) He never answers, but just continues to grin ~~on~~.

The first impression one gets when meeting him is that he (must be either stupid or even simple minded) ~~is a simple and stupid person. There seem to be intelligence or fire in him.~~ One suspects that he has little intelligence.) He talks very little, but (seems to) mumble~~s~~ a great deal to himself, (either that) or else his mouth is ~~always~~ (continually) moving as if he were ~~talking~~ mumbling to himself. ~~But~~ (However,) when one gets better acquainted with him, one ~~will~~ discovers that he is well educated, ~~and that~~ and ~~he~~ can write and read the Chinese language better than ~~many~~ many other people. ~~And~~ When he gets serious, which is very rare, his talk ~~of~~ on philosophy ~~and~~ and politics, (It is always on) ~~and~~ important matters ~~are~~ and (what he says can definitely) not to ~~be~~ discounted as ~~something~~ worthless. ~~For~~ So beneath ~~a~~ this seemingly stupid exterior, there (lies) ~~is~~ an understanding of life and its problems. It is only during these moments of seriousness that he is like a real person. He is then like ~~a person~~ someone suddenly transformed, like one who ha~~s~~ lost his (power of speech) ~~tongue~~ and suddenly ~~regains~~ recovered it. After he has talked ~~to~~ his ~~content~~ fill, he will (then) stop ~~speaking~~, and that peculiar grin will come into his face once more. ~~He is then~~ (He becomes) quiet, ~~like a~~ and timid (like a) youngster who is afraid of strangers.

In (these) rare moments when he becomes serious, we always encourage him to go on, more because of (our) surprise than of (our) genuine interest (on our part). ~~For one who knows him only as a stupid person, it comes as a surprise to listen to him talk with authority and confidence.~~

I have chuckled to myself when I recalled those rare moments when he talked freely, ~~and which~~ especially when I am suddenly aware of some humorous touch which I missed at first.

~~I have chuckled many times when thinking back of these rare moments I find so much humor which I missed during the actual incidents. In my recollection I laugh with genuine pleasure to see him talking, discussing the many varieties of subjects which he has a habit of doing.~~

Another (of the) strange thing~~s~~ ~~about him~~ (he does) is ~~that he~~ put~~s~~ to his hands in his pocket~~s~~ and rattle~~s~~ (his) money when~~ever~~ he ~~is in possession of it~~ has some. Even when ~~he is~~ walking in the street he will continue to do ~~with~~ this. (However the) ~~But the~~ most peculiar (and outstanding) thing about him is his ~~hate~~ dislike for work. ~~For~~ During the past few years he ~~has acquired the strange habit of~~ seek~~ing~~s employment only when he is in actual need of money. (As soon as) ~~When~~ he has a sufficient amount saved up, he will quit his job and (then) get another one (only) when the money (has) ~~gives~~ out.

His daily expenditure is less than twenty-five cents a day. ~~He pays~~ (His) room-rent ~~at~~ (is) three dollars a month, gas and light included. When he is not working, he wanders around the town, spending ~~the majority~~ (most) of his leisure moments ~~in the~~ (sitting on) ~~public~~ (public) bench in the park.

He eats only one meal a day (consisting of) one cup of steaming black coffee, and ten cents (worth of) cup-cakes. Whatever else he eats is available (to him) only when friends ask him to stay for dinner. Many times he goes to his friends' houses, and he times it just at the right moment, when they are having dinner. In this way he gets ~~gets~~ many free meals. People know that he ~~reaches~~ (comes to) their house at dinner time, just for a free meal and not because ~~of~~ (he is paying) a social visit, but they let him stay because he is amusing to

watch (and listen to).

~~Often~~ He (used to) come~~s~~ ~~into the~~ (to our) store at the moment when we ~~are~~ were having dinner. We always invited him to stay for the evening meal, and he always accepted. However, once, when he ~~came~~ had come every evening for ~~one~~ an entire week ~~just to eat~~, ~~a member~~ one of the family said, "He comes around just at dinner time to get a free meal. He never helps with the ~~####~~ dishes, and, besides, he is a nuisance."

Unfortunately, he overheard what was said. Since then he never comes around at dinner time. And he never eats anymore at our house.

There ~~are~~ were times when he almost starved to death because of lack of money to buy food. Mother would always asked him to come for the evening meal, but he remembered that remark which had hurt him, and has consistently refused to come. ~~For~~ He is exceedingly stubborn when he wants to be.

There is one thing about him that always amazes me. He drinks ~~a~~ great quantities of tea, about a gallon a day. The first thing he does when he goes to any~~body's~~one's house is to ask for a cup of tea. After the first cup is consumed, he goes to the teapot himself and ~~empties it with~~ (empties it very shortly) his constant drinking.

Once I said to him ~~in a jesting mood~~ jokingly, "Too much tea is not good for you. It may kill you someday." He answered quickly, "Tea is as important to a Chinese as water is to an American. Without it ~~a~~ a Chinese ~~cannot~~ could not survive." The tea he likes best is the heavy ~~ones, for~~ kind. He ~~does not like to drink~~ has no use for the light-colored tea at all.

His life seems very monotonous to us who watch him day by day. He has no close relatives in the Bay region. He has no place to go to except the park bench. He does not go to any shows or places of amusement. His world is his little room at the back of the house where he lives.

When he is working, he gets up early and comes home about six in the evening. From six to nine he either goes to the cigar-stand and watches people roll dice, or he goes to the house of someone he knows. By ten he is in bed. If he is not working, he gets up about noontime, goes to a cheap restaurant for his daily cup of coffee, then directly to the bench in the park and there he sits until the sun sets. Then he goes back to home to bed.

He does not speak to anyone unless someone speaks to him first. Often he will sit in a chair and stare at one intensely and intently. While he is staring (thus), his face will break into that peculiar grin that we think is so amusing to watch, yet it is at the same time, frightening, just like the smile of an insane man.

Sometimes when he is unemployed he will come into the store about four or five times a day. He comes so often that he is something of a nuisance because it is necessary to serve many pots of tea because of the great quantities of tea he drinks.

I remember once when he sat in the parlor grinning to himself and I said to him, "Why don't you get a permanent job?"

He answered, "A person should not work when he has enough to keep himself going. He should work only when he needs money. Just as soon as I have spent all my money, I shall go out and find a job."

"But do you not find this off-and-on method of employment very insecure. Suppose you are not able to get a job, then what would you do?"

When he heard that, the peculiar grin came into his face.

"I always get something to do," he answered. And the strange things is that he always (does) find something to do. But all his jobs pay very poor wages, yet he gets only the jobs that other people reject because he is willing to work for any price.

He has slaved long tedious hours behind a steaming sink for twenty dollars a month, working from nine to two in the early dawn. He has got as much as forty dollars a month working as a full time house worker. Forty dollars is enough to last him for three or four months.

He buys no new clothes, (as I pointed out,) eats no more than twenty-five cents a day, and spends no money whatsoever on pleasure or gambling. Even when he has enough money to last him (only) for a month, he will quit his job. (And) then he goes to work again when he needs money. Despite his peculiar way of working, he sends money back to his wife and two children in China. They do not depend on him for regular support, (of course,) since he sends money back only when he has some to spare. He often talks about his wife in China. "My wife is a beautiful woman," he said when he feels like talking, "and my two daughters are fine children."

Whenever he talks about his wife, people always make fun at him, and thereby hangs a strange tale.

When he came over to America to work, he missed his wife greatly, and in his spare moments, he thought of her constantly. He did not ~~think~~ believe that he would miss her so much. So intensely did he think of her, that he saw her in his dreams, ~~and~~ Whenever he saw anyone that resembled her on the street, he would stare at her for a long time. ~~At that time he only thought of her in his mind.~~ During those days his mind was completely filled with her.

And then something happened that changed his ~~entire~~ whole person.

One night he bought a ticket for a performance of a famous Chinese play which was ~~to be~~ then being performed ~~on~~ at the ~~stage~~ theatre. The leading lady in the play resembled ~~her~~ his wife so much that he ~~became~~ fell madly in love with her. Each night when he sat in the first few rows of seats, he hungrily devoured her with his eyes. So positively did he believe that the ~~stage~~ actress was his wife that he told his friends ~~that his wife was the stage actress~~ about it. ~~That this~~ Of course no one believed him, ~~but~~ But he remained positive in his conviction ~~that the actress was indeed his wife~~ despite what everyone told him.

Then he tried all manner of ways to meet her, ~~and~~ finally he succeeded. One look at him and the actress avoided him from then on. At first ~~the man was~~ he was profoundly shocked. His own wife did not recognize him! It was incredible!

Then as the days went by, he began to act strangely. A strange quietness seemed to come over him, and he would spend long hours in silence, his eyes far away, as if thinking of something. He paid less and less attention to his work.

Finally some friends said to him, "Why not go back to China to see your own wife? That will convince you that the actress is not your real wife."

But he had no money of his own. Finally a group of friends collected enough to send him back. They said to him, "You can pay us back anytime that you are able to do so."

He went back and saw his wife. He ~~knew~~ realized then that ~~the~~ this ~~stage~~ actress was not his real wife. He stayed two years in China, and, during ~~this~~ that time, two children were born to him, both girls.

He could not find any employment, ~~back~~ however, in China, ~~and then~~ so he borrow~~ing~~ed some money from ~~the~~ his friends back there, ~~he~~ and came back ~~body~~ to America.

When he came back over, his friends discovered that he ~~was~~ had greatly changed. Even though he was now convinced that the ~~stage~~ actress was not his wife, he spoke of her often, grinning to himself all the time.

Then he began to ~~go to~~ work for ~~seeking employment~~ accepting a job for a little while, and then quitting it for a while. ~~But he was able to pay back all~~ However he succeeded in making enough to pay back all the money loaned to him. ~~And~~ Since ~~then~~ his return he has been working in this haphazard manner, ~~off and on for many years~~ now employed, now unemployed.

Whenever anyone mentions the stage actress to him, he grins like a child.

He comes and he goes. Sometimes I do not see him for a long period of time, ~~and~~ sometimes I see him every day.

He is no longer funny or strange to me. ~~He is only~~ now however. I, too, have changed and now I find him only mildly amusing ~~now~~. But I have to see to it that there is enough tea in the house to keep him properly nourished. If he does not have enough to eat, the least I can do is to see that he has enough to drink.

Short Story
Fiction

Homeward Journey
XXX III

Jon Lee
No. One
11 Hours

200

The green fields stretched far over the horizon and the leaves of the trees were falling, falling. The air was crisp and sharp. The day was bright with golden sunshine. A perfect day for Tommy to start for home, A home which he left two years ago. A home to which he returned every year on this certain day. And he was all prepared to start his second journey. home.

He came out into the open air. He noticed the freshness of spring. He saw the green grass and the golden-yellow poppies. The last time thathe saw them was exactly a year ago when he went home on the same day.

He walked softly over the brown roads. "How good it is to walk on good solid earth," he muttered to himself. He stooped down and touched a buttercup lightly. He plucked the green grass and noticed how wet and dewy they were. Tears began to well in his eyes when he thought back two years ago on that fatal night when he was killed.

It was not his fault though. It wasn't anyone's fault. It just happened so suddenly.

On that morning he was awakened by his mother early in the morning. It was Friday, the last day of the semester. And Tommy was wondering if he could graduate or not. He had not been to school for almost two weeks. He was suffering from venereal disease which he contracted a week ago at a pleasure house. His face was red and blotchy. His neck was full of scars and pimply-like boils. He was so ashamed of himself that he did not dare to show himself in public places. Thus he stayed home day after day because of the result of a few hours pleasure. He did not understand why he was the only one who suffered. Cary and Richard were with him that

night. They did not suffer. Of course, they went to those places regularly. And Tommy had been there only once. Because of that one time he was suffering.

Tommy was eighteen then. He was young and he had a figure lithe ~~and~~ slim, trim. He knew that he had more than his share of good looks. He noticed the silent admiration in the eyes of the girls whenever he dressed up or went swimming in his short trunks. But he had never paid any attention to them at all. He loved sports and ~~he loved~~ the thrill of clean and glorious health.

Unlike other boys of his age, he did not ~~go~~ stay out till late at night. Rather he would like to stay home and hear his sister play ~~on~~ the piano. One time when Martha played and sang Shubert's Serenade, he cried because it was so beautiful and haunting. Like a poem, so beautiful. He was surprised at his own sentimentality. What would Cary and Richard say if they knew about this?

Cary and ~~Dick~~ Richard were his two best friends. Both were young and enthusiastic. They were attracted to Tommy because of his youthfulness and magnetism. They were pals all three of them. At the beginning of their friendship, Tommy was not included in what the two other youths did. Then as time went on, they included Tommy in everything they did.

One night when Tommy came home from school, Cary said to him, "Listen, Tom boy, come with us tonight. You'll be all right. You won't get hurt. Come on." Now Tommy had never thought much about girls. He did dance with some friends. That was on the night of the party given by the school. He talked with girls at school, but he had never yearned for the companionship from girls. He stayed with his books and his sports.

Now when Cary said that to him he did not know how to answer. He had heard about people who had contracted disease from those joints. And he was afraid. Yet in his heart he was yielding to the temptation. For after all he was boy. Rather he was a man now. During the evening he was thinking and worrying. He had no experience in such things and he was half afraid and half desiring.

So when Dick and Cary came to call for him at eight in the evening they found him trembling with fear and yet ready to go.

"Does your mother know where you are going?"

"I told her I am going to show with you boys."

"Got any money?"

"Yes."

The three young boys went slowly down the streets and then turned into a dark alley. "Just act natural," Tommy heard Cary say to him.

When ~~Cary~~ Tommy saw the girls there, he felt sick. All his desire ~~of lust~~ melted away then. He saw, however, that Cary and Dick were having a good time singing and smoking. He wanted to get out but he did not dare for fear that the other two would laugh at him for being afraid. So he stayed and tried to act as though he had been through such things often.

When he was alone with the girl he was not bashful. They talked awhile and then the girl gave him a lingering kiss. For a moment Tommy forgot where he was. All he wanted to do was to grab the girl and ~~held~~ hold her close to him. He was intoxicated with the beauty and allure of the girl. Then the girl kissed him again. And Tommy understand then and there what a kiss really was.

When he came down and rejoined his companions he was hot and warm. The cold air outside cooled him a little. And he felt better.

Cary said to him, "How was it?"

Tommy lied and said, "Oh, it was all right." But in his heart he was sick. He did not know how he ever went through with it. But the eyes, the soft hands, the warmth of the body and then he was conquered. It was sinful and vulgar, this sort of thing, he kept thinking.

That night he could not sleep. He still imagined that the girl was with him. And the thought kept him awake. Yet he was not sorry that he had gone. It had been rather fun. Then he remembered how his father and mother looked down upon such affairs and he was worried. "What if they should find out?" He could not sleep.

Thus worrying and thinking he drowsed away. The next morning he woke up tired and listless. He never felt like that in the morning. Then he remembered. Yes, last night. The girl in the room.

He washed himself and came down to breakfast.

His father and sister had finished. Only his mother was at the table. "Did you enjoy the show last night?"

"Yes, it was fine."

His voice sounded so strange that Tommy thought that perhaps his mother had noticed. But Mrs. Allan went on with her breakfast and Tommy was eased. He did not feel like talking at all. He was tired. He wanted to rest.

He heard his sister playing "Lover, Come Back to Me." He felt sick and he went up to his room and threw himself on the bed.

Out in the streets many little boys were playing. From his window Tommy stared at them. They were so innocent and wholesome. Not so long ago, he, too, was one of them. He too used to play in the streets. He remembered playing Hide and Seek and Cops and Robbers. He remembered picking up a dime on the sidewalk and keeping it himself. He had thought he was wicked because he had done that.

He heard the strains of sweet music coming from downstairs, so quiet and holy. And the angelic voice of Martha. For a moment he saw the flowers, the birds, and the trees. The music stopped and the picture of the girl, the dark night, his two companions once again came into his mind.

Then he cried, really cried for the first time in many, many years. His mother used to say to her friends, "Tommy is such a nice boy. He does not bum around like other boys. He studies and he is-oh, I just love him."

And Phil, the little ten-year old boy from next door was one of his pals. Tommy remembered what Phil used to say to him, "Gee, when I grow big I am going to be just like you and do everything you do." And he remembered how he kissed the little boy because he liked him so much.

The door to his room was being opened and he heard his mother's footsteps on the linoleum floor. "Tommy, is there something the matter? You look so pale and worn out."

"Nothing, mother, I'm just a little tired. I' ll be all right soon."

All afternoon he stayed in his room. He had no desire to go out into the sunshine. H e had no desire even to eat his afternoon meals. He had no desire to do anything.

That day he did not feel very well. He was sick. And he felt itchy all over. First he had a feeling that he wanted to scratch all over his body. But he did not seem to locate the itch. He was miserable all over.

The next day he had red scars on his legs and neck. Then he had boil-like lumps on the back of his neck. He got afraid. Had he contracted some terrible disease? He must have. Otherwise how could he explain the sudden appearances of the red lumps all over him? Now he was afraid, for his mother and father would find it out sooner or later. What would they say to him? "Oh, if I only had sense enough not to go there. Why did I?" he kept muttering to himself. "I was just a fool."

That day his mother said to him, "Why, Tommy what is the matter? What happened! Are you sick?"

"Oh, it's nothing. Just some pimples, I guess."

"Pimples, It's rather sudden for pimples." She stared at him. "Wait, I'll go and get the ointment. It'll do you good. Perhaps we had better call the doctor."

Tommy answered hastily then, "It really is not necessary. I'll go and see him tomorrow. It's not bad." His mother must not find out.

His mother brought the ointment and he put it on his neck. It did not seem to do any good. "I hope it will not develop into a serious case. Where would I get the money to pay the doctor? And this kind of disease costs a lot of money."

That week he did not go to school. His mother and father had found out in the meantime what was the matter with Tommy. At first Mrs. Allan could not believe it. Not her Tommy, anyway.

Now Tommy had a heavy feeling in his heart. He would not do anything to hurt his mother. For he really was devoted to her. And his father had ~~lead~~ led a decent and wholesome life. If there should be any scandal, he was to be blamed. Just himself.

Cary and Dick had not seen their little friend for many days. And they wondered what had happened to him. On the third day of his illness, the two friends came to see Tommy. But when they rang the bell, Mrs. Allan did not let them enter.

"So you're Cary and Dick. I know all about you and your kind. If you must have pleasure you can have it. But why did you have to lead Tommy into it? Look what you had done to him. Perhaps you have ruined him for the rest of his life. He's very very sick. If anything should happen to him I'll-I'll-oh, get out of here, get out!"

Upstairs in his room Tommy was looking out. He heard his mother's angry and loud voice. He saw Cary and Dick leaving rather sadly. Yet he did not blame those two for what happened to him. It was partly his own fault. He, too, was to be blamed.

And he was sad that all this trouble was brought about because of a little pleasure. What would Martha think of him now? Martha was such a sweet and delicate little darling, just like a doll. Her singing brought tears to the eyes of Tommy many, many times.

Now Tommy looked in the mirror and he noticed how thin and weak he had grown ~~to be~~ since that night. He had not been eating well and he had not been sleeping well. The school sent a man to find out what was the matter with him and he told ~~them~~ him, "I'm just sick, I'll be well soon."

"Well, son, you better get well soon or you will not be able

to graduate. This is the last week of school and it is very important that everyone should be at school."

Tommy had heard about students who cut school the last few days and how they were deprived of their diploma. But he knew too of a boy who was sick during the last week of school and how he got his diploma because he was suffering from a chronic disease. And Tommy thought that perhaps he should get his diploma because he was not cutting school intentionally.

So this Friday morning, the last day of the semester, his mother woke him up. He had an appointment with the doctor at ten o'clock. Tommy woke up tired. He had had a sleepless night. The doctor told him the day before that he should have come and seen him sooner.

And the doctor told him too that if he had come later than he did it might be so serious that he would not have time to get completely well. So this morning Tommy woke up from a night of long restlessness. He worried about himself; he worried about his graduation; he worried about his mother and father. He worried about everything.

When Tommy first went to see the doctor, he was very bashful and shy. He did not know how to begin and explain his case. He trembled while sitting in the doctor's office. Dr. Mills was a specialist who took care of such cases. When the doctor called him in, Tommy did not know what to say. But the doctor understood and did not try to embarrass him.

"You should be very careful of yourself from now on. This kind of case is very dangerous. In the more serious stages great complication arises. Then sometimes it is too late to do anything that would be of any good."

Now when Tommy heard this he was afraid. Perhaps he might even die from it.

Out in the bright sunlight he was very sensitive. He thought that everyone was staring at him. At his face and his neck. He walked quickly onward. Suddenly there appeared before him a strangely familiar building. Oh yes, that was the place that he went to with Cary and Dick. In the afternoon it was just a house. In the night it was a rendezvous for men and women. This place was the root of his trouble. The cause of his suffering. He passed on without looking any more at the building.

Poor Tommy walked dreamily on. He forgot about the people and automobiles which were rushing to and fro. His mind was wandering, wandering. A hand pushed him, but he did not notice. He crossed the streets without knowing that he did. Suddenly he heard someone ~~cried~~ cry out, "Look out!" He turned around. A dark object loomed in front of him. Bright stars appeared before his eyes. And then darkness. So he passed away, one lonely day, and the angels wept in the land beyond.

So this fine spring morning, two long years since he had died, Tommy was again going home for a visit. Last year when he returned, the house was just the same. His mother and father were the same. But Martha was a little different. She sang just as well as ever, but there was a sad and gloomy appearance on her face. She was not ~~looking~~ very well, he thought.

Tommy walked lightly and silently over the brown roads. Soon he would be home. Home. What a beautiful word it was, he thought. "Now I am going home." And tears dropped on the dewy grass. For Tommy was making his homeward journey.

He passed silent as a breath. He came upon the city. Everything was just the same as when he had left it, hope. Only there seemed to be more people than ever.

He saw a new theatre being erected. It was beautiful, so he thought. Gliding through the crowds of people he came ~~thus~~ upon his very home. The flowers were in bloom. And the little house was spotlessly clean. There were peace and quietness. But it was too quiet and silent. The house had never been like this before. There was no laughter and gayety in the yard. He looked out into the garden and he saw Phil, the little boy, now a young man. "The handsome little lad, getting more and more good looking each day. Dear little Philip."

He heard footsteps and he ~~heard~~ his mother's voice. She came into the room. She was grave and solemn. She was tired, and wearied. Poor mother, what was the matter with her. Tommy went forward and touched her gray hair lightly. ~~What~~ Why was his mother so sad and gray. "I wish~~ed~~ I could help her." But Tommy did not know how. Where was Martha? She must be home today. Tommy waited to hear her voice and her piano playing but Martha seemed not to be at home.

His father came into the room. He too was very solemn and gray. There was great sadness in ~~her~~ his eyes. He said, "The poor dear. The doctor had given all hope for her recovery. She does not know it. The doctor said not to tell her about it. The shock would be fatal to her since she is so weak." He blinked and there were tears in his eyes. "First Tommy was taken away from us and now Martha is..." Tommy saw that his father was crying, but Mr. Allan was trying to keep the tears back.

Mrs. Allan said, "Henry, there could be a little hope, isn't

there? She will get well, wouldn't she?" There was a tremor then in her voice. And Tommy heard it too.

Now Tommy heard all that was going on. And he knew that his sister was very sick. He went upstairs and he passed by his bedroom. Now it was made into a library. The room was completely done over. The room where his sister slept was opened. Through the doorway Tommy perceived a strange sight. There on the bed was a thin sickly young lady. Pale and fragile as a wilted flower. He could not believe that she was his sister, Martha. In the far corner of the room there was a nurse. She was preparing some medicine.

Tommy went closer and saw Martha moving back and forth as though in great pain. She coughed now and then and had great difficulty in the act. On her eyes there were tears. Tears which were not cause by crying, but by the pain while coughing. The nurse came forth, "Here, take this. It will do you good." Martha drank the medicine and looked relieved. In a few minutes the doctor came in.

"Miss Smith."

"Yes?"

" I want you to keep careful watch over the patient. It will only be a matter of hours. I feel so sorry for her."

Tommy heard this and he cried out, "You must save her. You must!" But the doctor and nurse did not seem to hear anything. And Tommy remembered himself. No, they could not hear him.

"The poor dear, her illness has turned into serious pneumonia."

Tommy went to the bedside. "Martha, you must get well. Mother and father would be so lonely if you go away." But Martha turned and tossed on her pillow.

Two hours Tommy stayed in Martha's room. He saw Martha turning and tossing uncomfortably. Once in awhile she murmured and muttered something very quietly. The doctor came to her bedside.

"The fever is rising. Miss Smith, phone the hospital and tell them to send an ambulance at once. Hurry!"

"All right, doctor."

The nurse took up the phone and dialed the number. "The line is busy, doctor."

"Phone again, but hurry!"

The nurse phoned again. "They are sending an ambulance over right away."

Dr. Mills sat down beside Martha. He watched her very carefully. Martha was pale and white as a ghost. He said, "Miss Smith, I think you better called the father and mother up. I am afraid the ambulance would arrive too late."

The nurse came quietly down the stairs. "Mr. Allan, and you too, Mrs. Allan, the doctor wants both of you upstairs right away."

Mrs. Allan was trembling, "What's the matter? What is it?"

"The doctor will tell you, please come."

Tommy heard his father and mother coming up those stairs. They came into the room and Tommy noticed how weary and sad they appeared. They must have suffered a lot. Really suffered. And Tommy felt sorry for them. He said to himself, "I must have cost them a lot of trouble by doing what I did. I will never forgive myself. Now Martha is going away. Poor father and mother. How they must have suffered." And he blinked his eyes.

"Martha darling, are you all right?" Mrs. Allan was silently weeping. "Mother, I feel so weak." Martha's voice was hardly audible.

"I feel so tired. I feel so ti-ti." Her voice died away.

Tommy heard his mother cried out, "Doctor, come quickly!"

Dr. Mills said quietly, "She's gone." And Mrs. Allan put her head on the bed and cried. Tommy saw that his father was trying to hold his tears back, but he saw him wiping his eyes with the handkerchief. And Tommy cried too.

There was silence in the room. No one spoke. Soon everyone left the room but Tommy. Martha came up and talked to him. "Tommy, where did you come from? I am so glad to see you."

"You know, Martha, I did not know you when I saw you so thin and frail on the bed. What is the matter with you?"

"Tommy, I've been sick for a long time. Since the day you went away I always felt so sick. Dr. Mills told me about a year ago that I must be very careful with myself or else I will someday be so very sick that recovery would will be very slight. I did not pay any attention to what he said. About two weeks ago I caught a terrible cold while out in the streets. At first I thought it would go away because I thought it was just a slight cold. But it got worse. I coughed and Dr. Mills gave me some medicine. It did some good but the cough was not eradicated.

"I could not eat very much. I lost weight. Sometimes I had fevers and I felt hot and uncomfortable. Oh, Tommy somehow I knew I would not get well. Something inside of me told me that I am going to join you." And Martha sobbed and cried. Tommy felt the hot tears rolling down.

"Martha, I feel so sorry for you. But I am glad for you now. For you are well at last. You do not have to suffer anymore."

And Martha stared at her own corpse. How strange it looked.

And she cried again.

And Tommy said to her, "But Martha, you must not weep ~~no~~ any more. For you are well at last. You are free from pain and suffering now. You have a new life ahead of you. We ~~could~~ can always come back and visit our house. And we ~~could~~ can be happy together."

~~Thus~~ Saying this, Tommy noticed that Martha smiled and he was eased. And he led Martha by the hand and slowly they came out of the room and descended the stairs.

They saw their father and mother sitting quietly on the bench in the room. Mrs. Allan was silently weeping. And Mr. Allan was very quiet. Neither spoke.

Tommy saw the piano on the far corner of the room. He thought about the many happy moments he enjoyed while listening to Martha singing those sweet songs. "Martha, would you play just one more song?"

"What song, Tommy?"

"Something sweet." He thought awhile. "Shubert's Serenade." Martha began playing and Tommy listened to the sweet song which he had not heard for so long. Martha began singing in a sweet and quiet voice and Tommy thought that her voice was truly the voice of an angel.

Tommy saw that his father and mother just sat in their bench staring out aimlessly. So quiet and silent were they, that they seemed to be like stone statues. And for the first time Tommy noticed who old his mother had become. The worry probably caused it, he thought. And his father too looked older than his forty-five years of age.

Will they be happy again? Tommy looked and wondered.

Martha sang and she sang like she never sang before. When she finished, Tommy could not say anything, so beautiful was the song. But he said, "Beautiful, Martha." And Martha was pleased. Thus did the two say farewell to their home.

Martha followed Tommy into the noisy streets. She felt the sunshine on her flesh and the air flying through her. And she said that nature was grand and glorious.

"Tommy, isn't it grand?" And Tommy smiled.

"Martha, I am taking you to your new home." And Tommy was making another journey home. Only this time Martha was with him.

They passed the noisy streets and came out upon the countryside. Martha saw the green fields over the horizon. She saw the grass, the poppies and the buttercups.

The two walked silently onward toward the horizon. And they were alone since no one else was on the road. They walked onward, onward.

The trees threw forth long, dark shadows and the city lights glittered. Tommy led Martha to her new home.

Jon Lee
Oakland

a sketch

Men on the Street

This is a story about men on the street, and let me say at the beginning that perhaps this is not a story at all. It's about a little incident that happened in front of our house, and because it laid such an impression of me at the time, I find myself unable to forget it. Now as you all know, Fifth Street is a very quiet street, especially on Sunday, but sometimes even on week days, one cannot see any people walking on the street. Across the street from our house there is a huge empty lot. There is a green trailer there occupied by a man and wife who had driven in from somewhere two years ago, and who had lived there ever since. Not far from this trailer a poor man lived in a small shack which he built himself four years ago. He had lived there ever since. Many people and cars ~~and~~ had come and gone, but this green trailer and this little shack remained forever. On Harrison Street, the Alameda tube cut across Fifth Street, so that no automobiles can come across Harrison on Fifth Street. All traffic is diverted either to the street above Fifth, or to the street below which is Fourth Street. Well, on Sunday, December the Fifth, I was in bed asleep. It was ten O'clock, and I always sleep on Sunday until noon. That Sunday at ten thirty in the morning, I was wakened by the muttering of voices outside my window. I paid no attention to the noise, thinking that perhaps it would go away soon. But it did not. Soon I heard the tramping of footsteps on the walk. Then more footsteps and more shouting until the noise

was so terrific that it was impossible to sleep. But still I lay in bed, too tired to bother to find out what the noise was about. The tramping and noise continued until eleven o'clock. Then, unable to stand it anymore I dressed quickly and lifting the curtain of my window, I peered out. The street and sidewalk were swarmed full of men. They huddled together in groups, some right under my window, others across the street, still others in the corners. There were men everywhere. They stretched in an unbroken line up to Broadway, and from Broadway down a few blocks. Well, my interest was aroused, and I got out of my room and went out into the street. The men were waiting for something, for they looked up and down as though they were expecting something. Then starting from somewhere the men began to fall in line.

"All right, men, eight in a row."

"Fall in."

"All right, snap into it."

With precision the men began to fall in line. What was once a group of swarming men ~~were~~ was now standing in order. The talk fell to a silent hush, until no one was talking at all. It gives one a very strange feeling, a sense of being out of time and space. The men stood there, waiting to march. But for thirty minutes they stood there, and still no order came for them to move forward.

About twelve noon a group of men passed out huge placards to the men. Soon they raised the signs up.

BIG THREE THROTTLES BUSINESS.

WE WANT PAY FOR OVERTIME, NOT TIME OFF.

OUR CHILDREN NEED MILK TOO.

Men, men everywhere. Mass demonstration.

Tramp, tramp, tramp, the men shall march. And not a woman anywhere. Just men, and still more men.

SAVE DEMOCRACY ON THE WATERFRONT.

OUR FIGHT IS YOUR FIGHT.

DOLLAR GOT MY DADDY'S CHRITMAS DOLLAR.

In the far corner a group was singing: Bye, bye, blues. Bye, bye, blues...put on your old gray bonnet...

AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL.

"Ready, men! March!"

Tramp, tramp, tramp, they moved slowly away. Line after line of men, marching, marching, marching...singing...singing.

MARITIME FEDERATION OF THE PACIFIC 35,000 members.

Tramp, tramp, tramp, they passed by.

At one o'clock the last of the men passed away. The tramping of feet still sounded in my ears. When they passed down into Broadway, I saw them no more. The street was now empty. It was deserted. It was lonely. And because I cannot forget the men on the street, I remember them, and because I remember them, I have been thinking of them ever since.

Tramp, tramp, tramp, the men are marching...

Short Story
Fiction

Temperature

XLIII

Jon Lee
No. Two
5½ Hours

It was the heat of the Sahara...the hotness of the equator... the fires of hell...the zip of red pepper...the taste of tabasco... the steam in a Turkish bath...and the temperature of hot weather.

There were faces, dead, blue, white, pale, and familiar. There were strange persons, tall, short, frail, and weak. There were voices loud, soft, hard, and kind. There were nightmares about horses, kings, trees, bicycles, and everything.

There was a room, small and cold. The wallpapers were browned by the age of time. On the wall there was a picture frame without any picture. The electric lights were turned low. And he, the boy, was turning and tossing.

The white sheet in the bed...the pillow so high...the bottle of cough medicine...the hot water bag...the nurse so calm...the doctor speaking...the mother softly crying...the fever rising, rising.

He turned and he turned. The fever was rising.

He heard the clattering of dishes. He heard his sister crying. He heard the water in the sink running. He heard the door being opened and being shut. He heard everything and yet he seemed not to be able to hear anything. The lights blurred. The white sheet faded away. The room turned and whirled and he turned with it. The sounds were gone. There was a ringing in his ears and he felt hot. Very hot, indeed.

"Oh, doctor, is he all right?" Then a face. "Oh, doctor!" Then another face. Very familiar too. "Is he.." Another face. The room was on fire. Fires darted here and there. The walls were burning. Crumbling into ashes.

And Dan was asleep in his room. He felt the smoke in his nose. The room was all dark and dreary. It was three o'clock in

the early dawn and everything was dark. He woke up. He saw red fires in his room. The walls were burning. He jumped out of bed and hastily put on his robe. He woke up his brother Dennis, who was sleeping on the other bed beside him.

"Dennis, Dennis, wake up! Fire! Hurry!"

Dennis yawned and mumbled. Suddenly he jumped up. "Fire!" He put his ~~clother~~ clothes on and he came out of the room. Dan called to him, "You go and wake mother and father and I'll go wake up Helen."

The fires was rapidly spreading all over the house. The coal oil in the kitchen stove had caught the fire and was burning brightly. The oilcloths on the kitchen walls were burning too.

Dan knocked at his sister's room. There was no response. He knocked again. Still no response. He break the door down and found Helen asleep, suffocated by the smoke. He took her out into the open air quickly. His mother, father, and Dennis were all out there. All were saved.

Suddenly Dan cried out, "Oh, my dog, I forgot." He rushed back into the house which was by now a burning furnace. "Don't, Dan, come back, Dan!" But Dan heard no one. He rushed into the house. To him the house was not on fire. He must save his dog. And he will too. The floors were shooting up darts of firing arrows. The burnt ceiling was falling down. A great big beam burning brightly suddenly came down. It fell just two feet away from him. The beam missed him by two long inches.

He heard Tarzan barking furiously upstairs. "Tarzan, I'm coming!" He went up the burning stairs two steps at one time. The stairs caved in just after he reached the top. And he saw the dog. He was burning as his hair had caught on the fire.

Immediately Dan began to slap out the fire which was burning his dog almost to death. "Oh, Tarzan, Tarzan," he mummured. And the dog barked which was his way of thanking his master for saving his life. And the dog wagged his burnt tail. "Come on, Tarzan, let's get out." He gathered the dog in his arms. He came to the stairs and found that it had caved in. He could not go down that way. He ran to the back stairs. It, too, was all burnt and he could not go down that way either.

He called out the window, "Dennis, I'm over in the back. Get me out of here! I'm burning! Hurry!" But no one seemed to hear him. there was no one out in the yard. The people next door were still asleep. "Where is everyone?" he muttered. He called again but still there was no answer. Dan did not understand why. Here he was in the house which was burning furiously and no one was able to see or to hear him. There were no fire engires around anywhere. And there were no spectators around. He did not understand.

The smoke came into the room. The dog in his hands whined and then died. Dan himself was choking. "Help! Help!" He coughed. He could not see anything now. The smoke was too thick. He could hardly breathe. He tried to yell, but he failed. He slumped down on the burning floor. He heard the roar of the fire. He felt the heat. He yelled, "I'm burning!" Then he was quiet. He was burning. His flesh became black and smoky and he went up in smoke. His ashes were burned away.

Turning and tossing, he suddenly felt strange. The fire was gone. And he was not burnt. But Tarzan was gone. But he was in a hot place. Gazing over the land he saw miles of miles of red-white desert sands. Just a plain desert of sand. Nothing else.

In the little crowded town, he saw many Arabs. And many, many camels. One of them looked at him and he thought that the face of the camel resembled someone he knew. Who, he could not tell.

The faces of the Arabs were very strange. The faces appeared blacker in contrast to the white robes they were wearing. Many were getting ~~feeding~~ ready for a trip across the desert. They were packing food and equipment to last for the journey. For a moment Dan could swear that he saw someone who looked like his brother, Dennis. But when he looked again, the face was gone and Dan was puzzled.

Unconciously he found himself among the group who were going across the desert. The sun was blazing and the wind was hot. The sea of desert sand rolled toward the unlimited distance. Nothing could be seen but the endless desert. The caravan started slowly over the ocean of red hot sand. Dan felt as if he were walking on the fire, so hot was the desert sand. Slowly but steadily they trod onwards. The blazing sun shone glaringly into the eyes of Dan. For a moment he thought that he was going to faint. The hot desert almost blinded him. He could not stand it. Hours after hours he trod on. Soon he was too tired to do anymore walking. The faces of the Arabs appeared before him. How strange they were. So ugly.

Dan fell down on the desert. The heat of the sand seeped right through his clothes. And into his flesh and bones. He tried to get up, but was unable. He called the Arabs, but the camels and the Arabs were gone. They just disappeared. He looked around but could see nothing but the ever rolling white sands of the Sahara.

He was lost in the ocean of sand. Where shall he go? Then the sun grew hotter and hotter. And still hotter.

And the hot wind grew in velocity. It howled and it moaned like the voice of a ship lost at sea. The desert sand swirled into the air. The wind carried it far away, far away. Dan was caught in the middle of the storm. The hot sand and wind burned him like tongues of darting fire. The fog of thick flying sand made it very difficult to see ahead. He heard the howling of the wind and he felt the biting of the hot sand. Outside of that, he did not know feel anything else. The wind came so fast and furious that he had a very difficult time trying to breathe naturally. One or twice he had a feeling that he could not breathe no more and it was a most strange feeling too.

His throat was parched and dry. He longed for water but he could not see any. All he saw was the sand and sometimes, the sky. The thundering storm gathered up its strength and in one great breath it blew and blew. The noise almost break the eardrums of Dan.

Then as quickly as it came the storm break down. And it was gone. Just a few feet ahead of him Dan saw some palm trees. And there was water and dates and a place for shelter. Dan felt as if he was dying from thirst, so dry was his throat. He went toward the palm trees. Yet he seemed never able to reach it. It was just a few feet away and yet everytime that he went forward he was not any closer to it. He walked faster, but the same thing happened.

Despite his fatigue he ran. Faster and faster he ran. But the water and the shelter seemed to receded more and more. He was panting for breath. His throat became so dry that he could no longer stand it anymore. He grew weak and dazed. And he felt on the sand. He drowsed away....and the soft music of guitars came to his ears. And beautiful senoritas came before his eyes.

Great and enormous palm trees lined the streets. The sun was shining very brightly. And Dan saw many man in huge sombero and highly colored shawls threw over their dark brown shoulders.

The girls were golden-brown in color. With long dark eyelashes. Their hair were shiny black and very long and smooth. Dan entered a cafe. There was a dance going on. Hips swayed this way and that. And he saw knowing looks passed from men to women. The dances were very colorful and dazzling. The songs were fiery and fast and very tuneful. There in the corner was a handsome shiek. And he was dancing a step with a peppy senorita.

Being very hungry and thirsty, Dan ordered food. And they brought him red hot dishes. And a glass of water. He drank it and he cough furiously. The water tasted exactly like tasbasco. For a moment he could not speak. He immediately picked up a glass of water. That glass of water was even more bitter than the other glass. And his eyes shot out and he felt hot. He grew hotter and hotter.

When he opened his eyes he was in a Turkish bath room. He was undressed and steam was coming out from everywhere. There were many man. The men wrapped in their towels reminded him of the Arabs. And suddenly he felt strange. He was lost in the desert and now he was in a Turkish bath with many other man.

Suddenly he felt cold. Cold water was running down his back. He was under a cold shower. And then he felt hot. He was under a hot shower.

Then cold again. Then hot. He was hot and cold. Hot and cold. Then he saw steam rising out from everywhere. It blinded him just like the desert sand did. And he was afraid again.

Then the naked bodies of men. Tall, short, white, yellow. The bodies brushed against his. He heard men plunging into the pools. He heard the showers falling, falling. But still the steam kept coming. And he felt hot.

Suddenly he was under a red hot shower. And boiling water ran down his back. It kept coming and coming. And then Hades came into view. The fires came down from the ceiling. A shower of fires glaringly red and hot. And devils with tails rushed back and forth. On their hands they carried bodies of nude ladies and men and they threw them into burning black tar. There were screams and yells that would chill the spirits of any mortal person. There was a certain devil who held a burning torch in his long sharp hands. Whenever anyone came forth, he would thrust the burning stick and light their hair and the victims would go screaming and yelling. Confusion was everywhere. The odor of burning flesh came upon the nostrils of Dan. It made him feel sick in the stomach. He could not stand it.

Then red devils, black devils, green devils came into the view. Each was holding a burning torch in his hands. And their eyes held a bright blazing fire that shot out now and then. All were looking at Dan. And Dan was afraid again.

They chanted, "Death, death, death. To you, to you. Death."

They drew closer, then closer and still closer. "Death," they yelled. "Death."

All the black devils shot fire into the direction of Dan and he felt his clothes burning. Then the red devils shot fire into his hair, the green devils shot fire into his flesh and he burned and burned.

And Dan screamed and screamed, "I'm burning, I'm burning. Help! Help!" He writhed and he twisted all around, but he burned and burned.

Then he was in the jungles of the Amazon. Savage faces peered from behind the bushes and vines. And he saw naked warriors looking at him. The mosquitoes swarmed around him and he had a difficult time trying to make them go away. There were drums and spears and there were paint of their faces. One of the warriors came forth and grapped Dan and led him before a a chief. And Dan saw a great big bowl boiling with hot oil. And underneath the bowl there were branches, wood and twigs. And they were burning furiously.

There was counsel between the chief and a medicine man and soon Dan was being disrobed by the warriors. And they felt his flesh and washed him over with clean hot water. Then with a swoop they threw him into the air and down he splashed with a great noise into the bowl of boiling hot water. And he boiled in the water.

Then the voice of Tarzan came into his ears. His room was on fire. Dennis was before him. Then his father and then his mother. Then Helen. He heard fire engines. He heard the water splashing into the burning house. He saw firemen climbing here and there. He saw falling pieces of wood burning and then dropped into the streets where there were many spectators. He saw wounded firemen coming down the ladders. And then Tarzan barked....and then the caravan came down the trail from far away. The Arabs were riding on their camels. He saw them from far away. Now he was drinking water from the distant ~~palm~~ spring and eating dates from

From the palms. His throat was not parched anymore. And from a female throat he heard a Spanish song. And dancers glided by gracefully. He drank water and there was no more tabasco taste to it. And then the water from the Turkish bath became freezing cold. And he shivered. And then he felt hot again. But he shivered.. And the fires of hell died down. The devils no longer shot fire from their eyes. The burning torches in their hands died out. And the boiling tar no longer boil. He ~~longer~~ smelled the burning flesh no more. Then the boiling pot of water in the Amazon valley grew cold. And he was swimming in a swimming pool.

Then a face. Then another. And another. "Oh, doctor, is he all right?" Voices from everywhere. "Oh, doctor." Then another face.

It was a small room. The wallpaper were browned by age. And the lights were turned low. And he, the boy, was sleeping peacefully. He did not turn and he did not toss. He was sleeping naturally now. Fives minutes before he was moaning and tossing. Now he slept.

The white sheet in the bed...the pillow so high...the bottle of cough medicine... the hot water bag...the nurse so calm...the doctor watching...the mother softly praying...the fever sinking, sinking...

Everything was quiet. The boy slowly opened his eyes and smiled a faint smile. He had passed the crisis. Now he could get well.

The doctor said, "For awhile I thought he was gone. His fever reached almost ~~to~~ one hundred and five degrees. And slowly it sank."

The mother silently prayed on. The boy slept.

L

One

It was evening now, and the streets glittered with the bright lights of night. The ivory mah jong clattered loudly from the gambling shops, and the smell of cigars and cigarettes polluted the night air. He walked along Webster Street, and the radio at the New Home Restaurant announced, Station KPO, San Francisco and Oakland. The sound of the gong would indicate seven p:m. Walking along the street he passed by the shooting gallery, recently opened and run by a white woman, a whore, ~~bay~~ by her looks. All right, boys, five shots for ten cents. Come in and try your luck. A man was smoking a cigar in the window. He was looking at the white whore. A big orange bus stopped suddenly, and a group of weary and listless Chinamen got out. Immediately new men rushed quickly into the car, to be whisk away into pleasure and joy far away. The Filipinos with sleek hair, and twenty dollars suits lined the walk, their shiny eyes hungrily watching the girls and young women. Another group rolled dices and played the nickel machine. Come right in boys, five shots for ten cents. He noticed the synthetic rouge on her dry mouth. And fresh painted cheeks and nose. She must be about fifty, but acting twenty. He knew that there were a lot of men in her life.

Two

The bright neon lights of See Hoy Low. Of pekin Low. of Kan's restaurant. Alone...alone... the orchestra was

playing loudly..alone.. alone...from the picture A Night at the Opera with the four Marx Brothers. Automobiles stopped on the walk and there came out beautiful white girls, and their boy friends, going up the marble steps of the Pekin Low. Alone...alone on a night that was meant for love. The smell of fish came out from the fish store underneath. A boy on the street corner with a whole stacks of Saturday's Examiners. Ten cents just ten cents. He went into Hamburger John, and he ordered cold ham sandwich and french fried potatoes. Outside the dancers went up to the Pekin Low.

Three

Ten in the evening. The Seventh Street train rushed by. The boy in the corner had sold all his papers. The dancers came up and down the marble stairs of the Pekin Low. Alone...alone...in a sky of romance above. He turned down Seventh Street, and reached the corner of Webster. The street was still crowded and the radio at the New Home Restaurant was still playing. He went down Webster toward Fifth. The street was very dark, and the freight train rushed by on Second Street. The fog horn of the ship on the estuary moaned. He turned down Fifth. Home. He opened the door. He went in his room and turned on the radio. The song was Alone. Alone...alone on a night of love. Alone..alone... He picked up a novel and read awhile, but he gave it up. Alone, alone, he is alone. He went to bed and the song Alone drummed into his head until he fell asleep.

Yes

A Very Strange Man

He never sleeps on a bed. All he has to do is to sit on a chair and put his head on the table and immediately he will fall asleep. He never eats at night on Friday. He buys new clothes only on the week before the New Year. He is too busy to get sick. Has never been sick as far as he could remember. His age is sixty yet looks a little over forty. He possesses no gray hair. Complexion very ruddy. Wears a peculiar kind of shoe without any strings or buttons. Drinks soup by the bowlfuls. Rarely eats American foods. He could not make a cup of coffee by himself.

It is a little hard to imagine that such a person could exist. But I can vouch for the truth of the story. When I first heard about this man I did not quite believe some of the things that I heard about him. But I later found out that all of the queer and strange things that this man do is not because he is...shall we say screwy...but because it is a habit in him and because he has been use to doing them.

He is an old man with a youthful appearance. Despite his sixty years of life he is as healthful as a new-born babe. There is nothing queer about him that stands out. I was quite disappointed. According to the strange things that I heard about him I expected to find a sort of maniac suffering from aberration of the mind. Instead I just found a normal and common person with a little more intelligence than the average man. His shoulders were not bent and he walked straight as a soldier. And he ~~tells~~ told some of the most unusual stories that I have ever heard. He is sincere in his telling, informing me again and again that they were true.

I asked him,"Is it true that you do many strange things so that people make fun of you all the time?" He is a very good nature fellow and never gets mad if some one ribs him.

"To me there is nothing strange in what I do. I got used to doing what people considered as strange. It is simply a habit with me."

Immediately there came into my mind an incident that a friend told me about this man. It seemed that whenever the washed his feet he fell asleep. And if he did not fall or move, he will remain in the same position for many hours. During the night he will take a somersault and then wake up. That's incredible and absolutely unbelievable but many people who ~~knows~~ knew this man ~~tell~~ told this story over and over again. True, no one has seen it happened, but somehow or the other the story leaked out and it is accepted as true.

Now this man is a sort of a woman's man. By that I mean he acts and talks like a female. His hands are white like a smooth lily. No wrinkles or roughness in them. Talks with gestures that are very amusing to watch. Wears the funniest kind of shoes imaginable. Buys them at a particular store which alone carries them. The shoes are of black leather with a sort of loop in the very back. It is just like a slipper except it is high like a shoe. No buttons or strings. To wear it, all that the wearer has to do is to catch hold of the loop in the back and push the foot down. Very very quaint.

I asked for a synopsis of his life story.

"There's nothing in my life that will interest anyone. I just lead an ordinary life."

I made him tell about it despite his protest.

"I have been in America for a long long time. Over thirty years I should say. I have taken only one trip back, that is all. The majority of my time is spent in working. I worked as a clerk in The China Elite. The store is no more now. I had a wife and a daughter. They both died ten years ago. I live alone these many years.

"And because I live alone I have made more than enough for a living. I left the store six years ago. I worked there for almost eight years. After many unsuccessful ventures the store was finally sold to another man. And the owner hired all new members and all of the members were discharged.

"The owner of the store, that is the old one, has not been paying the workers their monthly wages regularly. Business was getting to be so poor that many knew that they will lose their job. In former years during the Christmas holidays the store at the very least sold over the thousand dollar mark. During the bad years the Christmas holidays brought in just one fourth of the expected sales.

"The owners and the workers were especially hard-hitted by the dreadful change in business. The bossed owned money to everyone of the workers. Some of the workers in the store consented to have their wages reduced. Even after that the store could not get along. I left the store with four month of back wages unpaid. I have never gotten them as yet.

"The store provided the evenings meals to the workers. Every evening after the store closed, which was around six, the workers gathered at a dining place on Eighth Street for

their meals. Only the evening meals were provided. The men went home to eat their lunch.

"Every Saturday evening there was special dinner. On that night the men were treated to fancy dishes and wine."

"Do you deny any of the stories told about you?"

"I am sure that all of the stories you heard are a little exaggerated. But the truth is that I absolutely could not cook any sort of meal. Whenever I want a glass of chocolate or a cup of coffee I have to ask someone else to do it. It is not hard to make a glass ~~fo~~ of chocolate or coffee, but I could not do it. I must have rice in everyone of my meals or I feel half starved. It isn't that I do not like other foods, it is because I could not feel full when I eat them. You doubtless heard about me not eating on Friday evenings. The reason is that every Friday I have a shave. I feel very strange after shaving and I could not pass food through my mouth." Try and imagine such a person if you can.

Here is another sideslant on him.

He is afraid of darkness. Because of that he lived with another family. He rented a room in their house. This family was always going to San Francisco during the holidays. And whenever a holiday came along every member of the family was not at home. And if the man returned home he will find the house empty. So he stayed down at the store and wrote letters home to the in China. The family with whom he lived went to the theatres to see the stages shows. And they do not come back until one or two in the morning. So the poor man stayed down at the store until one or two in the morning.

He never smokes a cigarette or cigar in his life. Very rarely drinks wine. Does not take a bath in a tub. Goodness knows how he cleans himself or uncleans himself. He wears long woolen union shirts. Throws them away when the New Year comes. Then he buys new ones. Has very strong eyes but always reads with a manifying glass. Drinks soup but gives the impression of playing a musical instrument.

On rainy days he runs across the streets pulling up his trousers for fear that they will get wet. Just love to talk politics and knows the most hair-raising collections of ghost stories imaginable.

But enough nonsense for the while. Let us continued with his life.

"What did you do after you quitted your job?"

"I was unemployed for the while. It did not worry me a bit. I got enough save up to get along fairly well for a time. I work in a little grocery store afterwards. I did not get very high wages, but it was enough for me."

"Did you work very long at it?"

"About three years. I left the job because the owner sold the store off. The owner had a son who was sick for over three years. During those those three years the mother spent her entire fortune trying to make the boy get well. The son was doomed from the very beginning. He died. When the business was offered for sale nobody wished to buy it. Finally the whole amount of goods was sold at a ridiculous price. And again I found myself unemployed."

"What are you doing now?"

"I am sewing buttons for a friend of mine. He owns a dressmaking shop. This shop makes everyone clothes made to order. Also women's and men's underwears and pajamas.

"Customers come from all over. They come from other cities and from small towns. Sometimes we trust them too much and they run away without paying the bills. Or else they pay a part of the bill and the rest they leave unpaid. When we write letters to them they do not answer. When we call on them they are usually not at home. And sometimes we spend much more money to collect a much smaller amount. It all goes to prove that it is not easy to conduct a business these days. If we do not sell on credit we will not have much customers. And if we do there are all sort of complications.

"Out at the store right now there are many unpaid bills probably they will remain unpaid definitely. It is indeed fortunate for us if we collect one half of our bills. Right now we are very careful to whom we are selling on credit. By this method we are more careful and we could avoid many unpleasant circumstances."

"What other work did you do?"

"I never work at any job that requires a great deal of physical strength. In the first place I do not like that kind of work. Outside of working as a clerk and other small jobs I can say that I have not work at any other kind of work."

"What are your plans for the future?"

"I am content as long as I have enough to eat and a place to live. I don't care for travel very much. Even if I don't go back to China to live, I wish to take another trip back

just for a visit. There are so many friends that I have not seen for so long.

"I have very few friends. I rather be alone than to be in a crowd. I cannot mingle with the crowd. It is not because I do not like people but because I have been alone for so long."

And surprise! surprise!

He never gambles and he actually does not know how to play mah jong.

So for an appropriate ending we simply say, believe it or not.

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"I was unemployed for the while. It did not worry me.a bit. I got enough save up to get along fairly well for a time. I work in a little grocery store afterwards. I did not get very high wages, but it was enough for me."

"Did you work very long at it?"

"About three years. I left the job because the owners old the store off. The owner had a son who was sick for over three years. During those three years the mother spent her entire fortune trying to make the boy get well. The son was doomed from the very beginning. He died. When the business was offered for sale nobody wished to buy it. Finally the whole amount of goods was sold at a ridiculous price. And again I found myself unemployed."

"What are you doing now?"

"I am sewing buttons for a friend of mine. He owns a dressmaking shop. This shop makes everyone clothes made to order. Also womens and mens underwears and pajamas.

"Customers come from all over. They come from other cities and from small towns. Sometimes we trust them too much and they run away without paying the bills. Or else they pay a part of the bill and the rest they leave unpaid. When we write letters to them they do not answer. When we call on them they are usually not at home. And sometimes we spent much more money to collect a much smaller amount. It all goes to prove that it is not easy to conduct a business these days. If we do not sell on credit we will not have much customers. And if we do there are all sort of complications.

"Out at the store there are many unpaid bills probobly they will remain unpaid definitely. It is indeed fortundate for us if we collect one half of our bills. Right now ew are careful to whom we are selling on credit. By this method we are more careful and we could avoid many unpleasant circumstances."

"WHat other work did you do?"

"I never work at any job that requires a great deal fo physical strength. In the first place I do not like that kind of work. Outside of working as a clerk and other small jobs I can say that I have not work at any other kind of work."

"What are your plans for the future?"

I am content as long as I have enough to eat and a place to live. I don't care for travel much. Even if I don't go back to China to live, I wish totake another trip back just for a visit. There are so many friends that I have bot seen for so long.

"I have very few friends. I rather be alone than to be in a crowd. I cannot mingle with the crowd. It is not because I do not like people but because I have been alone for so long."

And surprise! surprise!

He never gambles and he actually does know how to play mah jong.

So for an appropriate ending we simply say, believe it or not.

"What other work do you do?"

rewrite story A Backyard's Secret Jon Lee

I suddenly awoke in the darkness, feeling strange and peculiar. I heard my brother snoring in the bed right across from me. I could not tell what it was that woke me up. I knew for certain that I began to wake up gradually in semi-conscious sleep. It was then that I remembered hearing strange moanings which seemed to come from above me. It happened again and again, and I awoke with a start. I looked at the clock on the table. It was three fifteen. Then out of the darkness from nowhere I heard that moaning again. It sounded like the voice of a woman suffering from pains of childbirth. At the interval of every five minutes I heard that strange and wailing sound. It was painful, it was hard to bear, and at times it was shrill. During those moments of pain, I felt as if a sharp blade had cut right through my flesh, piercing straight through.

Then I distinguished indistinct voices murmuring from up above, voices that became distinct, then blurred away into nothingness.

I was sleeping in the small attic with my brother. The window on the right side of the room faced the backyard, and it was the only window in the house. Often in the early morning I would stare out of the window, and look at the coming of dawn. The ground was barren, and the trees were without leaves. On the left side of the yard there was a spade leaning against the wall. Right next to it was an old garbage can.

But tonight I was awakened by the agonzy of murmuring voices. I wondered what it was all about. I heard the telephone ring at three twenty-five. I heard my mother opening her bedroom

door. My mother's voice rang through the silence of night.

"I'll be right up as soon as I've dressed." Her voice betrayed an emotion of fear and worry. Two minutes later my mother called me, "Sung, Sung, telephone to the doctor, and tell him to go upstairs to Mrs. Ling. Tell him to hurry."

I dressed myself quickly, fumbling with my clothes in the dark. I came down the step ladder, and saw my mother very impatient with anxiety.

"Hurry, phone," she said quickly to me.

But I was so afraid that something terrible had happened that I fumbled with excitement the telephone book.

"Holiday 9756, please," I said.

Two minutes later I heard a voice.

"Hello, doctor," I said quickly over the phone, "can you come over to Mrs. Ling's house right away. She's quite ill."

"I'd come right over," the doctor told me.

I told my mother that the doctor would come right away. She went up to Mrs. Ling's house by the back way because it was much quicker.

I went back to bed. My small brother was awakened by all the noise. He wished to know what had happened.

"Go back to sleep. The woman upstairs is sick," I told him. He slept. But somehow I cannot. About fifteen minutes later I heard an autombbile stop on the sidewalk. I knew that Doctor Lawton had come. I heard a bell ring. Upstairs a door opened, and I can hear very clearly the doctor's footsteps as he went up the stairs. A door slammed shut. And I heard voices again. My eyelids felt heavy, pulling me down. I was

falling asleep. The moaning continued. I heard indistinct voices. I drifted into sleep...

When I opened my eyes the sun was shining directly on my bed. I looked at my clock again. It was six in the early morning. Outside in the backyard I heard someone digging. The person was digging very quietly, but I heard it. I put my robe on hastily, and tiptoed to the window. The yard was still dark and gloomy. But faint morning was coming quickly into the yard. In the small corner next to where we used to burn papers I saw Mr. Ling digging a hole with the spade which belonged to us.

Everything was too obscure for me to tell definitely what Mr. Ling was trying to do. His face was turned away from me, only his back showing. His shirt sleeves were rolled up to his elbows. But I could see quite distinctly a white porcelain bowl, covered with a heavy piece of paper. I stayed at the window staring out into the yard.

Mr. Ling dug a hole approximately two or three feet deep. Then Mr. Ling buried the bowl down into the dark ground, and covered it up with dirt. He smoothed out the surrounding ground. Then he went up to his house. I went back to bed, wondering and thinking.

At nine o'clock my mother called me to wake up to go to school. When I came back from school at three thirty, I saw many women coming out from Mrs. Ling's house. Many of them I knew. Mrs. Wung said to me.

"You're back from school?"

"It three thirty, and everybody gets out at this time."

The group of women went into our house.

I went into my room, and took off my clothes. In the outside room my mother and three women were talking in small whispers.

Straining my ears I heard my mother say, "It was about a foot long. I could see the two little eyes. The hands and feet were slender and slim, and the body was not well formed. I looked closely and saw that it was a boy. When the father saw it he said, 'And it's a boy too.' He loves boys very much."

Mrs. Wung said, "Does it look like a human being? Or is it like an animal?"

My mother said, "It appears to be an odd looking child. It was half formed and half unformed. It's a fortunate thing that it died before it was born. It would not be a strong child or a good one either."

I was listening very much interested, straining my ears against the wall. Then I thought of the moaning, the doctor, and the grave in the yard. I went out into the yard and looked at the place where Mr. Ling was digging this morning. I recognized it at once, as it had the appearance of being freshly dug. I went inside and found that the other women had gone. After eating supper I went to Chinese School.

When I came back from school my mother was in a terrific rage, shouting and talking loudly. My father and step-brother was in the room also, leaning against the wall, staring at my mother.

My mother was in an angry mood.

"To think that she would say that about me. I never did anything of that kind. I never thought Mrs. Ling was that sort of person. She said that the whole city knows about her dead

went into my room, and took off my clothes. In the outside room my mother and three women were talking in small whispers.

Straining my ears I heard my mother say, "It was about a foot long. I could see the two little eyes. The hands and feet were slender and slim, and the body was not well formed. I looked closely and saw that it was a boy. When the father saw it he said, 'And it's a boy too.' He loves boy, a very moon."

Mrs. Wang said, "Does it look like a human? Or is it like an animal?"

My mother said, "It appears to be an old looking child. It [illegible]

I was listening very much interested, straining my ears against the wall. Then I thought of the morning, the doctor, and the grave in the yard. I went out into the yard and looked at the place where Mr. Ling was digging this morning. I recognized it at once, as it had the appearance of being freshly dug. I went inside and found that the other women had gone. After eating I went to Chinese school.

When I came back from school my mother was in a terrific rage, shouting and talking loudly. My father and step-brother was in the room also, leaning against the wall, staring at my mother.

My mother was in an angry mood.

"To think that she would say that about me. I never did [illegible] of that kind. I never thought like. Ling was just sort [illegible] the maid that the whole city knew about her food

child. When I saw the dead child I said to myself, 'Perhaps Mrs. Ling had the child killed because she has so many children now. Perhaps she could not afford to take care of so many.' I never said it out loud to anyone, not even to my husband or children. I would never would have believed it." She was panting for breath.

I stood there, listening, bewildered, wondering what everything was about.

For many days my mother did not go up to see Mrs. Ling. She was like a stranger to her.

One day my brother's wife had a little baby boy. I went over to his house and saw the little tot. It was cute, and just like a bundle of roses. Then I remembered the dead child of Mrs. Ling.

My brother's wife said to me, "I want you to bring some sour pig feet over to Mrs. Ling's house. Also bring a bowl of chicken whiskey, and be sure to bring the bowls back because I have to use them tonight." I was going to tell my brother's wife about the dead child. But I decided that it was best that I should say nothing at all.

I went over to Mrs. Ling's house. Her son opened the door for me, and I went right in. She was thin and pail, white and cold. She stared at me and I became afraid. She did not say anything. I went out of the room and took the pig feet and chicken into the kitchen. I emptied it and took the bowls back to my brother's house. Mrs. Ling was the only one who did not give a quarter wrapped in a piece of red paper as was the proper thing to do after receiving the pig feet and chicken.

My brother said, "She must be mad at me. I don't know why."

I left the bowls in my brother's house, and I went home.

For the next week or two my mother did not go to see Mrs. Ling, and she did not telephone up to find out how she was. I heard from my brother that Mr. Ling had brought the pig feet and chicken back to him. It was then that my brother had found out about the dead child.

A few weeks later my mother went up to see Mrs. Ling, and she was no longer mad at my mother. There was a misunderstanding, and that was all.

One day while I was walking in the street I saw Chew Quong and he said to me, "Did you hear that Mr. Wu's son got pneumonia and died. He lost two hundred dollars in cash this morning. His wife burnt the rice three days in succession. He had a lot of bad luck lately."

"Why?" I asked him.

"No one knows," he answered. He walked down the street.

The next morning I looked out of the window. I saw that the spade that was used to bury the baby was gone. Later I heard that Mr. Wu had borrowed it to clean his yard. Now, I understand why he suffered from bad luck.

The little lump of human flesh, buried in our yard could explain it

It was a secret which only our backyard understands clearly.

(fiction) A Backyard Secret Jon Lee 227
short story XXXVI No. Seven
5 Hours

I suddenly awoke to find myself in bed. All was darkness around me. I heard the snoring of my brother in the other bed right across me. I could not tell what it was that woke me up. I knew, however, that I began to wake up gradually. In my semi-concious sleep I remembered hearing some moaning which seemed to come from right above me.

I looked at my watch. It was three fifteen. I stared at the ceiling and floor because I could not go back to sleep. Suddenly out of the darkness from somewhere I heard the moaning again. It sounded like the voice of a woman suffering from pains of childbirth. At every interval of five minutes I heard that moaning. It was painful. It was suffering. At times it was shrill. During those moments of shrillness, I felt as if a sharp blade had cut right through my flesh.

Then I heard indistinct voices murmuring from up above. I was sleeping up in a little attic with my brother. The window on the right side of the room faced the backyard. It was the only window in the house. Often in the morning I used to stare out of this window and looked at the early dawn. I looked at the barren trees without any leaves. I looked at the dirt ground where we used to play marbles. On the left side of the yard there was a spade leaning against the wall. Right next to it is an old garbage can. In the early dawn when I woke up in the morning, I was fascinated by sunlight that shimmered through the window of our little attic.

But tonight I was awaken by the agony of murmuring voices. At somewhere around three twenty-five I heard the telephone rang. I heard the door of my mother's room being opened. From downstairs

I heard the loud voice of my mother saying, "I be right up just as soon as I dress." Her voice contained the emotion of fear. Two minutes later my mother called me, "Sung, Sung, come down and telephone Doctor Lawton to come over right away. Tell him to go to the address of Mrs. Ling. Tell him to hurry. It's important!"

I got up immediately. It was very cold. But I was so afraid that something terrible had happened that I got up quickly. Fumbling because of excitement I finally got steady with the telephone book that I am holding so awkwardly in my cold hands. I said in unsteady voice over the telephone, "Hello, I want Holiday 9756, please."

Threee or four minutes later I heard a voice. "What do you want?"

"Can you come over to Mrs Ling's house right away. She's seriously ill."

"I'll be right over." I told my mother that the doctor would be right over soon. She went up to Mrs. Ling's house by the back way because it was so much quicker.

Our house and Mrs. Ling's house both faced the same backyard. Mr. Ling lived with his wife and three children on the second story. Immediately under them there was a printer's shop. We lived in the next house. I went back to bed after telephoning the doctor. My small brother was awaken by the noise. He asked, "What's the matter?"

"Go back to sleep. The woman upstairs is sick." He slept. But I could not. Fifteen minutes later I heard an automobile stopped on the sidewalk. I knew that the doctor had come. I heard a bell rang. Upstairs a door was opened and the steps of the doctor while he was going up the stairs sounded very loud in the quiet silent night. A door slammed shut. And I heard voices again.

I drowsed away. My eyelids felt heavy. I was falling asleep. The moaning continued. It continued and continued....

I opened my eyes. The sun was shing directly on my bed. I looked at my watch again. It was six o'clock. Outside in the back-yard I heard someone digging. The person was digging very quietly but I heard it. I put on my robe hastily and went to the window on tiptoes. The yard was very dark and gloomy. The tall buildings adjacent to our house blocked the rays of the sun at that time from entering into the yard. In a little corner right next to the place where we used to burn papers, I saw Mr. Ling digging. He was using the spade which belonged to us.

I stared and stared but I could not make anything out. It was too dark. Mr. Ling's face was turned away from me so I only saw his back. His shirt sleeves were rolled up to his elbows. He was not wearing any coat in spite of the cold weather. Right next to him I saw a white porcelain wash bowl. It was covered with a heavy piece of paper. He dug a hole approximately two feet deep. I stayed at the window staring out into the yard. I imagined I stood at the window for twenty minutes.

I saw the man put the wash bowl down on the ground. He covered it up with dirt. He smoothed out the surrounding ground. Then he went up to his house. I went back to bed. Wondering. Thinking.

At nine o'clock my mother called me to wake up to go to school. When I came back from school at three thirty I saw many women coming out from Mrs. Ling's house. Many of them I knew. Mrs. Wung said to me. "Are you back from schhol so soon?"

"It's three thirty and everybody gets out at this time."

The group of women went into out house.

I went into my room. Outside the three women and my mother were talking in small whispers.

I heard my mother said, "It was about a foot long. I could see the two little eyes. The hands and feet were slender and slim. The body was not well formed. I looked closely and saw that it was a boy. When the father saw it he said, 'And it's a boy too.' He loved boys very much."

Mrs. Wung asked, "Does it look like a human? Or is it like an animal?"

My mother said, "It appears to be an odd looking child. It was half formed and half unformed. It's a good thing that it died before it was born. If that child were to be born, he would not be a very strong or good child."

I was listening very much interested. Then I thought of the moaning, the doctor, and the grave in the yard. The little child was ~~bury~~ buried there. I went out into the yard. I looked at the place where Mr. Ling was digging. I recognized it at once. It had the appearance of being freshly dug. I went inside and I found that the other women had gone. After breakfast I went to Chinese school.

When I came back I found that my mother was in a rage. She was mad. She was shouting. My father and my step-brother was in the room also. My mother was in an angry mood. She shouted, "To think that she would say that about me! I never did anything of the kind. I never thought Mrs. Ling was that sort of person. Never. She said that I went all around town and told people about her dead child. She said that I said that she deliberately went and had the child killed before it was born by a Chinese doctor. She said that I said that. And I never said such a thing at all. She said that

the whole city knows about it because I had talked. Why, no one knows about this except myself and a few close friends. Even my own children do not know about it. When I saw the dead child I said to myself, 'Perhaps Mrs. Ling had it killed before it was born because she has so many children now. Perhaps she could not afford to take care of so many.' I never said it out loud to anyone. Not even to my husband. And now she blamed me for gossipping about her dead child. I never would have believe it." She was panting for breath.

So it was a dead baby that I saw buried. I would never have guess it if I had not heard. Tragedy. Who could understand?

The next day my brother's wife had a little baby boy. I went over to his house and saw the little tot. It was cute and like a bundle of roses. Then I saw the happy faces of my brother and his wife. Then I remembered the dead child. And I thought to myself. A child could bring both happiness and unhappiness.

My brother's wife said to me, "I want to bring some sour pig feet over to Mrs. Ling's house. Also bring a bowl of chicken and whiskey. Be sure to bring the bowls because I have to use them tonight." I did not know what to say. Should I tell them what I saw? Remembering how mad my mother was, I decided to keep as silent as possible.

I went over to Mrs. Ling's house. Her son opened the door for me. I went into her room. She was thin and pail. White. Cold. She stared at me and I became afraid. Scare. She did not say anything. I went out of the room and took the pig feet and chicken out into the chicken into the kitchen. I emptied it and took the bowls back to my brother's house. Mrs. Ling was the only one who

did not give a quarter wrapped in a piece of red paper as was the proper thing to do after receiving the pig feet and chicken.

My brother said, " She must be mad at me. I don't know why."

Oh, Brother, if you only could know. If I only dare tell you. It is not you whom she is mad at. It is your mother.

Then I went out into the streets. I came home.

For the next week or two my mother did not go to see Mrs. Ling. She did not telephone down. I heard from my brother that Mr. Ling had brought the pig feet and chicken back to him. He left them at the house and then he went away, so my brother told me.

On Tuesday I heard my mother talking to Mrs. Chung, a woman who lived in San Francisco. She had heard too. And she came over to visit the woman because Mrs. Ling was a close friend of hers.

Mrs. Chung said, "It was four weeks ago that she complained about pains in her abdomen. She went over to San Francisco to see a Chinese doctor. The doctor said that it was gas that made her sick. He prescribed some herbs which did no good at all. The next two days she was better. She was stronger. On Wednesday night she rolled on her bed. Her face became flushed. She moaned. Her husband thought she was going to die. Yet she did not say anything to her husband about it. Around two thirty that night she could no longer stand the pain. She herself did not know what was the matter with her. Neither did her husband know. The doctor came. The doctor with careful strokes of his hand began to hit on the abdomen of the woman. Soon the baby was born dead. The husband was very surprised as he was not expecting any baby at all. He was more than surprised. The husband then went out and told his friends that the doctor seemed to be playing a drum while he was hitting the abdo-

men of his wife. The wife heard about it and she became mad. She blamed you for spreading the news. Mr. Ling is very afraid of his wife. He did not tell her that he told it himself. But I knew and I told Mrs. Ling about the matter. She seemed calmer now. She will telephone and talk to you in a few days."

My ears were glued close to the wall. I heard everything. But I said nothing. I went out to my bedroom and looked out of the attic's window. Now some weeds had grown over the spot where the baby should be. I noticed a little white flower too.

I was walking in the street the next day. Chew, a friend of mind said to me, "Did you hear that Mr. Wu's son got pneumonia and died. He lost two hundred dollars in cash this morning. His wife burnt the rice three days in succession. He had a lot of bad luck lately."

"Why?"I asked him. "No one knows," he answered. He walked down the street.

The next morning I looked out of the window. I saw that the spade that was used to bury the baby was gone. Later I heard that Mr. Wu had borrowed it to clean his yard. Now, I understand why he suffered from bad luck.

The little lump of human flesh, buried in our yard could explain it.

It is a secret which only our backyard understands clearly.

~~rewrite story~~ The Hag who Went to Hell ~~Jon Lee~~

The old hag sat outside her door, and slowly rocked the chair she was sitting on. Her faithful dog lay close at her feet, keeping a virgil ~~guard~~ over ~~his~~ its mistress and to frighten away anyone who ~~desires~~ tries to ~~###~~ harm or molest ~~the old hag~~ her.

This strange old woman was always reading books, and what the books were no one had ever found out. ~~The old hag~~ She was a ~~strange~~ mysterious character, so strange and odd that the people of the little town often wondered and tried to figure out ~~guessed~~ who she was. Some said she ~~was~~ had once ~~a sinner~~ committed a great sin, and that ~~her life~~ she had not been the same since then. Others again insisted that she had always been ~~Others said she was~~ a good woman, and she had been brought to this ~~led~~ through ~~a~~ hard and unfortunate ~~life~~ experiences.

It happened that so there lived in the same town ~~in this same town~~ a boy by the name of Wing. He was an orphan, accustomed to wandering around the town, doing nothing to help himself along. No one bothered him, and no one cared what he did. He was the leader of a group of boys who always played pranks upon ~~the~~ innocent people, some just ~~in a jestful mood~~ as a jest, others ~~in a troublesome way~~ with a malicious purpose. The people of the town gradually ~~came~~ to be afraid of this group of boys. The parents of the boys tried their very best to keep their children from associating with Wing, but it was ~~useless~~ impossible to prevent it.

Now this old hag lived in a ~~crumbled~~ tumbled and broken down shack on the edge of the town, ~~living~~ alone and in silence, away from the people and noise. She never talked to anyone, and ~~on~~ no one ever talked to her.

One day Wing and his group of boys were passing by this old shack. Many times they had passed by, and paid no attention to it but ~~but it happened that~~ this time they stopped and wondered what the old hag was doing. Just then ~~The old hag~~ She came out ~~from inside~~, and sat down ~~on~~ in her rocking chair,

and immersed herself in her books ~~deeply interested in her books~~. Her faithful dog kept a close guard ~~on her~~, its eyes staring straight at Wing and his companions ~~group of boys~~, ready ~~determined~~ to ~~###~~ protect its ~~his~~ mistress, at the slightest threat.

Now Wing was determined to find out what she ~~the old hag~~ was reading, so he said to one of the boys, "You keep a close ~~close~~ watch on the dog. I will go up to the old hag ~~woman~~ and take her books away (from her)."

Wing approached ~~toward~~ the old hag. The dog got up, prepared ~~getting into position to~~ spring upon ~~upon the~~ Wing, at any moment.

"This ~~Today~~ is a fine ~~good~~ day, is it not?" Wing began ~~demanded the old hag~~.

The old hag raised her head, then lowered it, and continued to read her book~~s~~. The dog was still suspicious of Wing, ~~still bristling~~ its hair, still bristling.

Wing's face ~~faze~~ became ~~grew into~~ a livid red with rage ~~color~~, and he shrieked ~~yelled~~ out at her ~~in a strong voice~~, "So, you won't answer?" He picked up a large stone and threw it against the window, shattering the glass into small pieces. The faithful dog sprang upon Wing, and buried his fangs in his leg, leaving an ugly and bloody gash. ~~leaving a deep and bloody gash on his leg~~. The old hag ~~threw~~ poured a perfect torrent ~~forth a verbal attack~~ of strange sounds (at him), mumbling ~~uttering~~ and whining almost like a bitch ~~female animal~~.

Wing's companions ~~The group of boys~~ scattered to the four winds ~~into everywhere~~, running pellmell ~~away~~ in all directions to avoid this mad and ferocious ~~biting~~ dog. Wing was left alone, warding off ~~fighting~~ the dog as ~~the~~ best ~~way~~ he could. He ~~He~~ finally managed to get away, hurt and bruised.

Many days passed by, during which ~~and~~ Wing did not have a chance to call his companions ~~group of boys~~ together again. Meanwhile the old hag continued on with her reading, sitting there outside in the sun.

Wing had failed to get the books, but he made up his mind he would not give up until he had seized at least one ~~could get them~~.

had The old hag ~~sat~~ continued sitting outside her door, ~~and each day she~~ reading her books with religious ~~faithfulness~~ devotion, devouring every word, every phrase.

~~The old hag had~~ Many years before she had sinned ~~long ago~~, and now she was ~~going~~ attempting to obtain ~~purify~~ absolution for herself by reading the books that would purify her mind and body. ~~The years went by, and the old hag suffered a slight aberration of the mind~~ In the course of years this preoccupation with one idea had slightly unhinged her mind, and she ~~came~~ had come to believe that everything described in the books ~~were~~ was true. She believed that virgins went to heaven, and ~~the~~ sinners went straight to ~~tortuous~~ hell. and ~~To~~ In hell ~~where~~ they ~~burned~~ were consumed in flaming fires, ~~where~~ their stomachs were ripped opened with long sharp spikes, ~~where they fired flames into the eyes of sinners~~ and flames of fire thrown into their eyes. In ~~a certain~~ ~~one of the~~ a chapter ~~it said~~ of one of her books it stated, ~~"When the~~ that a sinner reaches hell ~~she could not~~ one cannot see very well, ~~The world was~~ that the external world became blurred, and ~~her~~ one's vision ~~was red~~ impaired. ~~She~~ Now she had sinned, ~~therefore~~, and that is why she was now having difficulties with her sight and had to wear spectacles and ~~now she is suffering with her eyes. She saw familiar sights, but she could not see well again."~~ that is why although she could still see the things familiar to her she did not see them clearly.

In another chapter it ~~said~~ read, "She came to heaven, and the Gods came to welcome her. They offered her food and wine, and she became an angel. She ~~was~~ had been a good woman, and therefore, ~~now~~ she was now ~~will be~~ to be rewarded with a happy ~~for the~~ and ~~long~~ eternal life."

The old hag memorized these chapters, and every single moment of her spare time, she spent in deep study of the books. Often she ~~thought~~ murmured to herself, "I ~~had~~ have sinned, ~~it's~~ that is true. But now I have become purified, and when I die, I will go to heaven. My sins will be forgotten there." And so the days went by, and she read on and on.

Now two weeks had passed by, and ~~one day~~ Wing called his ~~group of boys to him.~~ companions around him. "This time" he said to them, ~~"This time~~ "we must not fail. We must get those books, and see what they are."

The ~~group of~~ boys started up the road that led toward the house of the hag. Arriving there, they saw the old woman outside, sitting in the sun, reading her books, completely immersed ~~deeply interested~~. The dog recognized Wing immediately; it got up, ready to defend the old hag at all costs ~~if necessary~~.

Wing shouted ~~said~~ to one of the boys, "Keep careful watch over the dog. And don't let it ~~him~~ get me this time."

Wing approached slowly ~~toward~~ the hag, and he yelled out (at the top of his voice), "Give us one of your books, and we will go away." The old hag paid no (to him) attention. Then Wing gave the ~~a~~ signal, and the ~~group~~ ~~of~~ boys rushed forward, and Wing succeeded in seizing ~~was able to grap~~ one of the books (and her glasses) ~~away from the hag~~. The old hag became wild and mad, and ~~her~~ the strength that still lay dormant in her awoke and she belabored Wing with heavy blows. ~~dormant strength which was ##### sleeping suddenly became awake~~. The dog ~~was~~ enraged ~~with what was happening to ####~~ was powerless to help ~~its poor~~ its poor ~~its~~ mistress. ~~The old hag managed to give a long and hard blow upon Wing.~~

Finally what between the ~~The~~ enraged woman and the dog ~~proved too much for the boys. They went away,~~ the boys were put to flight. But Wing had secured ~~got~~ his book.

Then Wing took it to a learned man who told him that ~~learned from a man that the books was one on~~ it contained a description of heaven and hell, among other things... ~~he explained everything to Wing~~.

~~And then a sudden idea came to Wing, and he was determined to go through with it.~~

~~Now~~ The morning dawned. The old woman ~~hag~~ woke up, to find ~~and she found~~ herself in a (world that was strange and unfamiliar) ~~strange and bewildered world~~. A sudden fear gripped ~~hold of~~ her, ~~for what she perceived was just what she had read in the books.~~ She looked ~~The hag gazed~~ around, and the place seemed ~~was~~ strange (and yet) ~~ly~~ familiar. She heard the dog barking, but could not see it clearly. Her fear increased ~~She grew afraid~~, and she said to herself, "Can ~~"Could~~ it be possible

that I am dead? Am I in hell ~~right~~ now this moment? But I have not sinned since that day so many years ago." She ~~felt~~ touched herself ~~all over~~ again and again. Yes, she ~~feel-ing her~~ had a body, ~~and~~ head, hands everything. She was still a complete ~~person~~ individual. She sat down on a small stool, her head in a daze, the world blurred out and foggy ~~all~~ around her. The little dog barked loudly. Then she suddenly ~~remembered~~ that she had struck Wing. Yes, that was it. She should not have done it. Now ~~that she had died, she~~ she was dead and was suffering with her eyes, just ~~like~~ as the woman in the books she ~~read about~~ had been reading.

~~But~~ Yet somehow the hag could not believe that she was dead. Everything around her ~~was~~ seemed familiar, ~~but~~ even if strange. ~~The had said, "Woe is come to me,~~ But overwhelmed again with fear she exclaimed, "Oh, what have I done! I should not have struck the boy. But it is too late now, for I am dead and I am ~~now~~ in hell. ~~I am suffering with my eyes.~~ My vision is blurred." The ~~wet~~ tears rolled down her cheeks. ~~She cried and moaned for many hours.~~ And so she sat there hours weeping and moaning.

~~Quite~~ Then unexpectedly there came a loud knock rumbling at ~~near~~ the door. ~~The old hag~~ She was afraid to open it. She hestitated. Perhaps ~~it was~~ they were devils ~~to come~~ coming to take her away to the ~~spike~~ gardens where the sinners are spiked.

A hollow voice came ringing through the door.

"Open, old hag, open or I shall break the door down."

The little dog barked again and again, jumping around in wildly excitement.

~~The old hag became afraid, feeling~~ She was weakened with fear and she felt lost and strange. ~~She walked~~ unsteadily ~~over the~~ she walked across the ~~hardwood~~ floor, and opened the door.

Her heart ~~skipped a beat when she~~ almost stopped beating at what she saw through ~~a~~ her blurred and indistinct vision: the boy whom she had beat on yesterday. ~~The~~ And the boy said, "I am now a spirit, and I ~~shall~~ will haunt you forever, forever

and ever, you dirty old hag."

The dog rushed forward at the spirit of the Wing, but with a ~~strong~~ peremptory command ~~of her voice~~, ~~the old hag~~ she stopped ~~the~~ it. ~~dog.~~ The dog obeyed, and went back growling to his corner.

The voice of the spirit continued ~~said~~, "You are dead, and soon the devils will come ~~soon~~, to take you away. Your stomach will be ripped open, and your intestines will flow out. You shall suffer for your sins." And the spirit laid ~~laid~~ an icy hand on the forehead of the old woman ~~hag~~.

Trembling with fright, quivering, all over that poor old woman ~~the old hag with~~ the collapsed into ~~aberrant mind was in~~ a fit of despondency.

And then ~~She~~ said in that almost uncomprehensible voice of hers, "I am not suffering for what I did ~~so~~ long ago. ~~Now~~ I am suffering for what I did to you. Forgive me!"

The spirit of Wing touched her again, and ~~again~~ she felt his ~~the~~ cold icy hand.

And again she heard ~~The~~ hollow voice of the ~~d~~eparting spirit ~~said~~, "I shall come soon ~~again~~ to haunt you." ~~The~~ The door closed, and ~~the hag~~ she found herself alone once more ~~again~~. There she sat, her mind a blank yet confused and turbulent.

~~The old hag was all confused, her mind in a turbulent state of blankness.~~

"~~Are~~ Were all these years that I spent in purifying myself to come to naught? Am I to come to an end like this?"

Glancing around the familiar room, she saw the ~~these~~ books she used to read. Seized with a sudden madness ~~Feeling mad all of a sudden,~~ she grabbed ~~grapped~~ ~~hold~~ ~~of~~ the books and tore them into small pieces. She pulled her hair, shouted, yelled, screamed ~~yelling wilding and loudly~~, and smashed whatever ~~st~~ stumbled across her way.

The dog barked, staring ~~out~~ with strange (and astonished) eyes ~~as to what had happened to its mistress so suddenly~~ at his mistress as if wondering what had suddenly come upon her.

Then ~~quite~~ suddenly a loud knock was heard at the door and the hollow voice of Wing came bellowing through the silence of the room.

"The devils are here. Prepare yourself for ~~dissection~~ your torture. We are ready." The old hag looked through the doorway and saw a group of devils, with long tails and horns, coming into the room. This time the devils went straight toward the dog in the corner and ##### tied it with a strong rope.

The dog barked loudly.

"I am going to ~~dissect~~ cut you up and drain (out) your blood ~~out~~."

Saying this, one of the devils took out a long sharp knife, flashing it ~~this way and that~~ in all directions.

The old hag was delirious with fright now.

She yelled out, "~~Do not~~ Don't do it. ~~I~~ I'll do anything you say, only ~~do not~~ don't cut me open."

Then before she could say anymore, she felt something poking her stomach, but she felt no pain.

The devil drew out a bucket of red blood, red hot blood.

"Here feel it," the devil said.

And although she could not see well, the old hag saw the red liquid. She felt suddenly sick ~~all of a sudden~~.

~~The devils said again~~ Then again she heard a devil say, "We will burn your intestines, your liver and all your the organs. We will burn ~~all of you~~ you up entirely."

The old hag ~~became~~ had become a wild and shivering maniac. Her eyes stood out like the white ~~balls~~ eye of a dead fish. ~~She felt~~ Cold chills were running up and down her ~~cold~~ spine. Time and again she tried

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And although she could not see well, the old hag saw g liquid. She felt sick all of a sudden.

devils said again. "We will see your intestines, your liver and your stomach."

The old hag became shivering maniac. Her eyes stood e like white balls on a dead fish. She felt cold chills nning up and down her cold spine. Time and again she tried

to utter something, but her tongue was bound and she could not speak. ~~caught, and speech was powerless to her.~~

~~The group of~~ Then the devils ~~chanted~~ began chanting in ~~a~~ their peculiar ~~tone~~ way, and ~~they~~ danced around and around her, poking her with long strong sticks ~~they were holding~~ held in their hands. ~~The old hag had a more difficult time trying to see,~~ It came more difficult than ever for the poor old hag to see what without her glasses and the hot tears ~~came rushing to~~ streaming down her eyes. The devils ~~chanted.~~ continued their chant. ~~They shouted;~~ They mumbled; they shouted; ~~They wailed~~ they wailed their song of death. The old hag ~~was lost in the maze of nightmare fanatism, utterly bewildering and eerie.~~ sat there, utterly entangled in this maze compounded of a nightmare and the garbled memories from ~~of~~ her books.

Then one of the devils pulled ~~up long organs of~~ out what seemed her intestines and showed them to ~~the hag~~ her.

"We ~~are going to burn your organs, and your intestines.~~" shall now burn them and your other organs as well."

The old ~~hag had a nauseated feeling~~ woman was suddenly ~~attacked~~ suffocated by a feeling of nausea. She closed her eyes, not daring to look. ~~There was a~~ A sick feeling came over her ~~in her body.~~ From the other side of the room the odor of burning flesh ~~came~~ was brought to her ~~nostrils~~ nostrils. ~~Why~~ Oh, why must she die so slowly?

She knew she would have to die a slow painful death, because ~~the books said so.~~ that is what the books had said. Now she regretted ~~having read those books.~~ more than ever that she had read them. She kept her eyes closed, shutting them tight.

~~The~~ And then she heard the spirit of Wing. ~~said,~~ He was talking to his companions, "We shall come back tomorrow to inflict more torture upon this ~~hag here~~ woman. Come, my devils."

~~And the old hag~~ She heard the devils go out.

She opened her eyes quickly, but everything was vague and indistinct.

"I am suffering with my eyes. I have sinned, and so I suffer," she said. She felt herself all over, ~~and she~~ felt something wet all over her abdomen, but it was not cut open.

The old hag ~~lamented and repented.~~ sat there, lamenting ~~her~~ the anger that had prompted her to strike the boy. ~~She moaned and cried to herself.~~ Deeply she repented. It was of no use now. So she sat there moaning to herself and weeping. She did not feel any pain, despite the fact

[illegible]

[illegible] sticks they were holding in their hands. The old man had a [illegible] trying to see, the tears came running down [illegible]

[illegible]

Then one of the devils uttered a long groans of impatience [illegible]

The old man had a tormented feeling. She closed her eyes, not daring to look. There was a sick feeling in her body. From the other side of the room the odor of burning [illegible] came to her nostrils. Why must she die so slowly? She knew she would have to die a slow painful death, because [illegible]

She kept her eyes closed, smelling them sight.

The shadow of [illegible] "We shall come back tomorrow to inflict more torture upon this man here. Come devils."

And the old man heard the devils go out.

She opened her eyes quickly, but everything was indistinct. "I am on fering with my eyes. I have sinned, so I suffer," said. She felt herself over, and she felt something wet [illegible], but it was not out there.

[illegible]

[illegible] again despite the fact

that she knew her stomach and intestines had been cut out ~~were taken out~~ and burned ~~in~~ over the hot fire.

She made her way to the corner and untied her dog. It wagged its tail, and licked her ~~the~~ face ~~of the old hag~~. She was too exhausted to worry about the devils anymore. Let them come; she did not care. Let them kill her; she did not care. Only, why must she die such a slow and such a painful death?

She lay down her bed, tired and completely fatigued. The dog finally awoke her with its barking. She went out the door, and saw some familiar objects far away that looked like trees. Some hidden fire within her, gave her strength. ~~An distinct fire from far away gave her strength~~. She sat outside for a long time, somewhat refreshed.

Then she recalled to her mind ~~thought back of~~ all the things that she had done ~~did~~ so very many long ago. Perhaps, after all, the day she had sinned so grievously did have something ~~had something~~ to do with her present torture ~~today~~.

The night came on, and the old hag slept, a refreshing, ~~an uniterrupted~~ sleep uninterrupted sleep brought on ~~brought about~~ by exhaustion and fear. The morning dawned grey and cloudly as usual.

~~The old hag~~ She woke up with a start, suddenly remembering all the things that happened. Could it have been ~~be~~ a dream that she had had ~~she dreamt~~? But no ~~it wasn't~~. All around her she saw the same familiar things, and they were still blurred and indistinct. Yes ~~She~~ was still suffering ~~with~~ from her eyes just as ~~like~~ the woman sinner in the book.

Toward afternoon there was a loud knocking at the door.

"We are back," the spirit of Wing said, "and we have come back here to torture you once ~~some~~ more."

The outer ~~outside~~ door opened; ~~and~~ the devils marched ~~came~~ in. Immediately they commenced to wail ~~the devils chanted~~ their chant ~~song~~ of death. They twirled, and whirled

[illegible]

the hot fire.

She made her way to the corner and untied her dog. It [illegible]. She was too exhausted to worry about the devils anymore. Let them come, she did not care. Let them kill her; she did not care. Only, why must she die such a slow and painful death!

She lay down her bed, tired and completely fatigued. The dog finally awoke her with its barking. She went out the [illegible] trees. An distinct fire from far away gave her strength. She sat outside for a long time.

Then she thought back of all the things she did so very long ago. Perhaps the day she sinned had something to do with her torture today.

[illegible]

The old hag woke up with a start, suddenly remembering all the things that happened. Could it be a dream she dreamt? But it wasn't. All around she saw familiar things, and they [illegible] her eyes just like the woman sinner in the book.

Toward afternoon there was a knocking at the door.

"We are back," the spirits of Ming said, "and we have come back here to torture you some more."

The outside door opened, and the devils came in. Immediately [illegible] their song of death. They twirled and [illegible]

and danced all ~~around.~~ about her.

One of the devils ~~was preparing~~ then began to prepare a ~~strong~~ hot fire.

The spirit of Wing said to her, "~~Today we will~~ And now we shall burn you. The fire is ready ~~now~~."

~~One~~ Then of the devils said, "Prepare yourself to be thrown into the fire.

The ~~group of~~ devils rushed forward, grabbed the ~~hag~~ old woman and carried her around the room. They ~~caught~~ placed her ~~and brought her~~ close to the fire. ~~Through~~ And then her weak eyes, ~~the hag~~ she caught sight of the red flames of fire ~~jumping~~ leaping up and down, She suddenly let ~~forth~~ loose a terrific scream, yelling ~~in a strong~~ at the top of her voice.

~~Then suddenly she heard~~ The scream was reechoed by another, one equal in intensity. She heard it. It was loud laughter of the boys.

~~The the~~ The spirit of Wing then came forth and ~~said~~ spoke to her, "Here, you old stupid near-sighted hag, Here is your pair of glasses. I stole ~~it~~ them from you one night and decided to play a joke on you. I had been ~~know~~ told all about those books."

The old hag put on her pair of glasses and she saw that she was in her own room, and that directly in front of her stood ~~were~~ Wing and his ~~group of boys.~~ young companions.

~~They went out and Wing said, "I guess we torture enough. We better leave her alone now."~~

~~Then the group of boys took off their fantastic costumes and went home.~~

Lifted

The Man from Hell

He had been to hell. He was saved in hell. He came face to face with Yim Lowe Wong, the Satan of the land of the dead. He came out of ~~the~~ that pit of darkness a newer and a stronger person.

There it was, the strange apparition without a body. By the door. The boy saw it. He called out loudly. When they found him, he was on the floor, writhing in pain and moaning. His face was as if drained of blood, and in his eyes ~~[illegible]~~ there was an expression of shock such as people wear when they have seen a fearful ~~[illegible]~~ thing, some object of ~~shocking fear of unuttered horror~~ unutterable horror...

Now it was night. He had a dangerous fever. He tossed and moved. His face was burning hot, and the room seemed to be on fire. Then downward, downward. He was sinking. Toward the bottom of the earth. Darkness. Then coldness. What was this? ~~[illegible]~~ It was the land of the dead. Suddenly he saw that strange apparition again. There it was in the dark corner. Quickly it vanished away into the darkness. The boy was left alone in the silence of space.

He heard the soft tinklings of many bells. Bald-headed priests marched quietly by in a solemn procession. Their faces were white and pale.

"Come, little boy, come follow me. I shall show you the way."

Bewildered, astonished, the boy followed. He passed through many ~~complicated~~ intricate corridors. At last he came to a great hall. Fire leapt back and forth. It was very hot. On a high throne,

in the hottest part of the room, sat "Yim Lowe Wong," the satan of hell. Frightened, the boy looked up at him. The black faced king shot him a piercing glance.

"Why are you here?" he demanded, "This is not the place for a little boy. Get away!"

The boy ran. Upward, upward, he began to ascend at a terrific pace. Soon ~~afterward~~ he could distinguish a dim light. The heat and fired died down. He was cool and calm again. He opened his eyes. And he began to yell frantically for his mother...

He was a sick boy. All his early life had been a long ~~was a~~ series of illnesses and suffering and this had all been brought about because a stranger saw him too soon. It was ~~a rule~~ the custom ~~in~~ the village where he was born that no newly born babe could be seen by a stranger until a certain number of days had passed by. If the baby was ~~is~~ seen by any stranger during these days of isolation, it was ~~he is~~ doomed to suffer ~~a~~ long periods of hardship and ~~torture~~ torment.

About forty-four years ago, there had been ~~was~~ great excitement in the ~~a~~ village when it became known that Mrs Liang ~~a certain woman~~ was about ~~going~~ to give birth to a child. It was the expectant mother's wish to have a boy ~~child~~, for boys were highly regarded in those days. Late in the night it was born, and there was great rejoicing for ~~since~~ the mother had given birth to a boy ~~male~~.

The parents took the greatest ~~extreme~~ precaution to prevent any strangers from looking at the child until the proper number ~~amount~~ of days had passed by.

On the fourth day after the birth of the child, however, a stranger entered the house and saw the baby. When it was discovered at last that the baby had been seen by a stranger, the parents were seized with the greatest ~~had great fear~~ for the child. And as if to prove the truth of this superstitious belief, the child suffered from one sickness after another. During his entire childhood he was never well ~~physically~~. He was thin and underweight, and his ~~His~~ face had ~~possessed~~ a sickly pallor.

When he was six years old, he developed ~~suffered~~ a skin inflammation ~~irritation~~ which spread ~~ran~~ all over his legs, ~~inflamming his skin~~. This lingered on for many years, and only after much ~~many~~ suffering did ~~years~~ he recover~~ed~~, but this had left him ~~he was so~~ weakened that he fell a victim to one disease after another.

It was when he was ten years old ~~that~~ he had had that terrible dream of going down to hell.

Regularly he went with his father to the store where he worked, ~~and it happened~~ One day ~~that~~ he daught a cold which developed into a lingering and chronic illness ~~case~~. During this period of illness his hair began to fall out. He had all the appearance of one who had been through a trying period of a famine plague. His face became still thinner until he looked like a skeleton with ~~only~~ a thin layer of skin. Fortunately for him, he got better.

Then came that unforgettable day in his life, the day ~~which~~ he would never ~~could not~~ forget. Yet it was that experience ~~the day~~ that saved his life, So he was told by everyone who ~~had~~ listened to his story of his ~~that~~ journey ~~dream~~ down to hell.

[illegible]

That day he ~~went~~ had gone down to the store with his father (as usual). While sitting in a chair, he felt drowsy, and he had ~~a~~ the sinking sensation of falling into slumber. It was ~~at that moment~~ then that he saw the strange being without a body. That night he had the weirdest of dreams. ~~He~~ When he dreamt his dream, of going down to the abyss of the earth to visit the land of the dead. When he awoke, he was perspiring rapidly. ~~Miraculously~~ His fever was miraculously gone the next day. Then slowly his hair began to grow back. In a few short weeks of resting in bed, he ~~had~~ gained back every pound that he had lost. Fully recovered, the old people in the village ~~stated that~~ claimed it was a good omen, and that the boy would never suffer illness again.

However, when he was sixteen, he almost lost his life because of a serious ~~case~~ attack of dysentery. He recovered from this ~~serious~~ attack by taking ~~strange~~ funny herbs which an old man prescribed for him. Since then he has never had the slightest ~~experienced any more~~ illness.

~~And~~ Yet as the man explained later on ~~his story~~, "I did not want to believe that ~~just because~~ that a stranger ~~saw~~ had seen me before a certain number of days had passed by, ~~was~~ the cause of my ill health was due to the fact. But sometimes no matter how skeptical ~~we~~ one may be, ~~we are~~ I am inclined to think that perhaps after all those old beliefs, ~~curiously~~, have, curiously enough, some foundation after all. There was another boy I knew who suffered from sickness ~~because of~~ for identically the same reasons. The old villagers would not ~~flinch from their beliefs~~ hesitate for a moment to insist that ~~it~~ the illness was caused by a stranger ~~who saw him~~ seeing a child too soon." ~~It~~ And so it was because of that is dream that ~~he~~ the man got well. The fear

that he experienced had somehow ~~chased~~ driven the illness ~~from~~ out of his body.

"And perhaps it was not a dream after all," he ~~continued~~ insisted, "perhaps it was really to hell that I ~~went to~~ did so. It was such a vivid experience that I can still remember everything detail about it."

When he was born he was given a name with a good meaning. But because of physical ailments, his name was changed to that of a girl, ~~because of~~ Such was his mother's wish. She was told by a fortune-teller that the change of name would bring the boy back to health.

The early life of the boy was spent in learning the old classics. In his spare time he helped his father manage the farm.

He came to America with a friend when he was but ~~just~~ a young man. Here he worked and studied very hard. After many years in this country he went back to visit his parents. There for the first time he met the many new additions to the family (that had been born in the meantime). There were five new members since from the time he had left to the time he returned. Almost immediately upon his arrival his parents arranged a marriage between him and a neighboring girl, ~~with~~ a girl with ~~small~~ bound feet. The ~~whole affair~~ matter was settled very quickly.

The young husband brought his wife over here ~~to live~~. Arriving in this country, they were greeted by many old friends.

The young wife had a hard time adapting herself to the steepstreets of San Francisco, but she finally did manage to get used to them.

The husband and wife chose a small ~~moderate~~ little house ~~home~~ in the heart of Chinatown. They furnished it with good but not too expensive furniture. And so ~~the~~ their life in this new country began.

Almost immediately the young husband was given a position in a food store. It was his duty to ~~of~~ answer the phone and take down all orders which the customers desired. He wrote down all telephone purchases. These orders were filled out by other workers in the store who delivered them to the customers.

Toward the end of the month all the books had to be gone over, and during those few days, the young husband was busily ~~occupied at his task of adding and subtracting~~.

restore!

In those days food stores were operated in a very peculiar manner. ~~he explained,~~ The owner of the store tried to get as many customers as he could ~~can~~ to buy from his ~~store~~. The others did the same thing. Many bitter fights were fought because a customer stopped buying from a certain store and went over to trade at a different one.

There was one good way in which to keep the customers from trading elsewhere, and that was for ~~Every New Year~~ the store to donate every year gifts of chicken, duck eggs, and oyster sauce to the cutomers. These ~~gifts~~ gifts were the owner's appreciation of the customers' trade for the year. The ~~Some~~ stores that did not do this lost many of their best customers.

The people who bought their food from the various ~~different~~ stores were very strange in their allegiance. They bought their food from a certain store because they knew the people ~~there~~, and no matter how cheaply the other stores sold their goods, they would not buy

from them. Even today many people do this.

This man has had many names. When he first went to school, he was given a school name which had a good meaning to it. When he went into business, he used a business name. Then, of course, there is his real name which he does not use as much as his business one.

~~The reason why some Chinese people have such odd sounding names is because they are named with words that have definite meaning. Even if the names do sound strange in English, it does not matter. they do not matter because it is the meaning that is the definite important thing," the man said. "For instance, the business houses have names such as these: Million Prosperity Luck, Million Business Peace, The Three Luck, Golden Luck Profit, and many others. Girls as a rule are given names that have a connection with the ##### word beauty, or connected with names of flowers and fruits."~~

Today this man is still called by the girl's name which his mother gave him. Because he is known by that name to so many of his friends, he adopted it as his real name...

~~He and his wife have been in California for twelve years, and they are the parents of six children. One of the children died many years ago. The oldest child is married.~~

Since ~~the~~ that fateful day ~~that~~ when he saw the black faced king, ~~the man~~ he has never suffered any serious illness outside of that one attack of dysentery. He still believes that it was the intense fright ~~that~~ which made him well. The old people in the village said to him, "If you ~~were~~ had been destined to stay down in that dark hole, you would surely have died that night. But because your parents and

you ~~are~~ were good and honest people, the black faced king chased you out and made you well. Otherwise, you would surely have died then."

Today, thanks to ~~the satan~~ Yim Low Wong, the ruler of hell, he is alive. He is not making a large amount of money, but enough to live on. His wife stays home and does all the cooking, and cares for the entire family. She is famed for her excellent ~~cooking~~ food. There is no one who can compete with her in making "gin dur," ~~otherwise known as~~ Chinese dough cakes, and "tong youen," which resembles the former, but is much smaller and done in an entirely different method. Most people only make these foods on holidays and times of ~~celebration~~, but this woman makes them often because her husband likes them. Often during weekends, she and her women friends gather at her house, and they make all sorts of fancy delicacies.

Her husband, the man from hell, is today a man of the earth. He never dreams about that black faced king anymore. He hopes that he never will. His "bot gee", ~~which is the Chinese word for~~ that is, his horoscope tells him that when he is over fifty years of age, he will ~~have~~ become prosperous ~~ly~~.

"I believe it," he tells everyone ~~said~~, "because many things have come true already."

Short Story
Section

The Hag Who Went to Hell

XLVII

Jon Lee
No. Six
10Hours

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It was an old shack, crumbled into small pieces of wood, that first attracted the attention of a group of boys. In this old shack there lived an old woman, and she was strange, so strange and odd, that the people often wondered and guessed who she was.

Some said that she was once a sinner and that her life had not been the same since then. Some said that she was a good woman. The group of boys, known all through the town as a bad lot, decided one day to find out something about this old hag.

This group of boys was run by a leader whose name was Wing. Wing was one of the worse boys in the town. His appearance was ugly and his face was full of red pimples and blackheads. He was an orphan. The people in the little small town first knew about this wandering boy as a vagabond. He was seen wandering around the town doing nothing at all. No one bothered him because he was such a fiery character. He was gaunt and tall, but his strength was like that of an ox. In this little country town where the population of the Chinese was about fifty, this Wing boy lived.

He was a bad influence to the other little boys of the town. When the other boys saw him, they were so scared of him that they did everything he told them to so. The mothers and fathers tried their best to keep their boys from associating with him, but it was almost impossible.

Now one day when Wing and the group of boys were passing by this old shack of the hag, they stopped and stared at it. Many times before they had passed by, but this time, since they had nothing to do, they stared and wondered what the old hag was doing. But they never bothered her because the hag had an old dog that did his best to protect his master from harm.

[illegible] at attracted the attention of a group of boys. In this [illegible] there lived an old woman, and she was strange, so strange [illegible] that the people often wondered and guessed who she was. Some said that she was once a singer and that her life had been the same since then. Some said that she was a good woman. [illegible] group of boys, known all through the town as a bad lot, looked [illegible]

This group of boys was run by a leader whose name was Lin [illegible] He was one of the worst boys in the town. His appearance was [illegible]ly and his face was full of red pimples and ugliness. He was [illegible] orphan. The people in the little small town first knew about [illegible] a wandering boy as a vagabond. He was seen wandering around the [illegible] doing nothing at all. No one [illegible]ered him because he was [illegible]h a fiery character. He was proud and cold, but his strength [illegible] like that of an ox. In this little country town where the population of the Chinese was about fifty, this Ming boy lived.

He was a bad influence to the other little boys of the town. [illegible] the other boys saw him, they were so scared of him that [illegible] did everything he told them to do. The mothers and fathers [illegible]

Now one day when Ling and the group of boys were passing by [illegible]

This old hag was always sitting on the outside of the shack reading books. Wing was very anxious to find out what she was reading. This day he decided that he was going to find out. He and the group of boys approached the hut of the hag. He said to one of the boys, "You keep careful watch over the dog, and I will go up to the old woman and take her book away. Remember, keep watch on the dog."

So when he stopped in front of the woman's hut he said to her, "Today is a nice day, is it not?"

The hag looked at him and did not answer. She continued reading. Wing said again, "It's a nice day?" The hag continued reading. Then Wing yelled, "Listen you hag, what do you mean by not answering me? Who do you think you are?" And he picked a stone up and threw it and break the window right over the head of the old hag.

The dog saw that his owner was being molested and he jumped up and ran for Wing. The boy who was to take care of the dog was so afraid that he ran away. The old hag threw forth a verbal attack of strange sounds. And the boys found out that she could not talk very well. In fact what she said could not be understood at all. The dog ran forward and bit the leg of Wing. Then he growled and whined. By this time most of the boys had run away as they were afraid of the dog. Wing was left alone. Since he could not combat the dog alone, he too ran away.

He had a terrible cut on his leg. So he limped and staggered his way back to the town. He muttered, "Those boys are all cowards, running away like that. Just wait till I get my hands on them." And his face grew livid and mad.

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[illegible] group of boys approaching the hut of the dog. He said to one of the boys, "You keep careful watch over the dog, and [illegible] go to the old woman and take her book away. Remember, keep [illegible] on the [illegible]."

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He had a terrible cut on his leg. So he limped and slowly crept [illegible] back to the town. He muttered, "Those boys are all cowards, [illegible] like that. Just wait till I get my hands on them."

[illegible] grew livid and red.

The next day he saw the boy, who was supposed to take care of the dog while he was talking to the woman, on the streets. He said to him, "You, why did you run away? The next time that you do that again, I am warning you, I will knock your teeth out. I am going to that old hag house again. And I need yourhelp."

The little boy grew afraid and he said timidly, "Honest, I won't do it again. I tell you, I won't."

They parted and each went on his way. The little boy was glad that he escaped from Wing so easily. He expected to be given a terrific punishment by the older boy when he saw him coming down the road.

Many days passed by and the group of boys didnnot have a chance to meet again. Meanwhile the old strange woman continued her reading. She sattout in the bright sunlight and read and read. The little brown dog sat by her side and watch over her.

This old hag had sinned. How, she did not tell anyone. But since that day she said to herself that she would not have anything to do with men. She had lived alone since that day in the little house with her dog.

This old hag was a terrible looking person. Her hair were white, but they appeared black because they were so dirty. Her face was browned by the long hours she spent outside in the sun. From afar she looked like an Indian of long ago. As long as no one bothered her, then she was calm and let people alone. But whenever anyone tried to make trouble to her, then her dog would do anything to protect her. However, sometime people brought her food and water and she accepted them. The kind-hearted women of the town had pity on her and they tried to help her out.

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The old hag had sinned. And now she was going to live a clean and decent life all over. In order to be purified she said to herself that she was going to become religious and read books that would purify her. She collected a group of these books and read them and reread them.

As the years went by the old hag suffered a slight aberration of the mind. And she came to believe that everything in these books were true. She believed that virgins went to heaven and the pure sinners went to hell. To hell where they burned in fires, where their stomachs were cut opened, and where spikes were poked through their stomachs. In a certain chapter it said, "When the sinner reached hell she could not see well. The world was blurred and her vision was bad. She had sinned, therefore, now she is suffering. She saw familiar sights. But she could not make them out distinctly. She would never see well again. She had sinned and she will suffer with her eyes."

In another chapter it said, "She came to heaven and the gods came to welcome her. They offered food and wine, and she became an angel. She was a virgin, therefore, now she will be happy for the long days to come."

The old hag devoured this material and she almost memorized them in her heart. All her spare time, she spent in reading these religious books. She said to herself in a voice which she herself could understand since she talked in strange sounds, "I have become purified and when I die I will go to heaven. Go straight to heaven. There I will be happy. My sins will be forgotten there." And the days went by and she read and read.

Now two weeks had passed by. And Wing called the group of

[illegible] she was going to live a [illegible] [illegible] later to be crucified she said [illegible] result that she was going to become religious and read so [illegible] would [illegible] her. She collected a group of these lovers [illegible] read them and recite them.

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[illegible] her passed by. And king called the room of

boys together again. He said to them, "This time we will surely get one of those books. We must not fail. I will get it if I have to hurt the dog." And the boys saw that Wing was holding a great long stick in his hands.

The group of boys started up the road that led toward the old hag's house. Arriving there, they saw the old woman outside sitting in the sun and reading the book. But before they reached the hut of the old woman, Wing had taken out from a little hole in the ground a brand new twenty-two rifle. He said to the boys that he was going to use it on the dog if necessary.

So now when he reached the hut of the old woman he was holding the rifle in readiness in case the dog should come forward. The dog recognized him and he stood up and was ready to defend the hag, if necessary. Wing shouted to the hag, "Give us one of your books and we will go away peacefully. Otherwise I will make trouble to you." Then Wing came forward and tried to take one of the books away. The dog rushed out and before Wing had a chance to use his gun, he dropped it on the ground and the old hag picked it up. With this gun she began hitting Wing on the shoulder. Now the woman was mad and the strength which was dormant in her now came to life. This, combined with the fury of of the enraged dog, proved too much even for the group of boys.

Wing had lost his gun and he said to himself, "I am going to get it back." Now Wing had taken one of the strange books of the hag and since he cannot read, he was going to bring this book to a man he knew and let him explain it to him.

That day he took the book to the man he explained that it was a book on heaven and hell. He explained a few pages to Wing.

[illegible] stuck in his hands.

The group of boys started up the road that led toward the old [illegible]'s house. Arriving there, they saw the old woman sitting [illegible] the sun and reading the book. But before they reached the hut [illegible] the old woman, King had taken out from a little bag in the [illegible] round a brand new twenty-two rifle. He said to the boys that he was going to use it on the dog if necessary.

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Now the morning dawned. The hag woke up and she found herself in a strange world. She grew afraid. For what she saw was just what she read not so long ago about the woman who went to hell and how her sight was suffering because she had ~~seen~~ sinned. The hag looked around and the place was strangely familiar. She heard her dog barking, but she could not see him distinctly. Then she grew afraid and she wondered to herself what had happened to her. She said to herself, "Am I dead and am I in hell right now? But I have not ~~sin~~ sinned since that day so long ago. But I could not be dead." Then she felt herself all over and she found herself to be a complete person. She sat down on a little stool and wondered for a long time. The dog, which she could not see very clearly, barked. And the hag immediately got up. Yes, she remembered now. She should not have struck the boy on the shoulder. In the books it said that anyone who hurt a child would be punished when he died.

But the old hag could not believe that she was dead. The place where she was now, was very strange, yet it appeared to be very familiar. "Ah," she murmured, "I should not have struck the boy. I know now that I have done wrong. But it is too late. I am dead and now I am in hell. All this time that I spent was to purify myself and now this has to happen. Woe is come to me. Woe is come to me." And she fell down on the bed and cried and sobbed. She lay on her bed for hours. Soon there was a slight knocking on the door. The old hag was afraid to open it as she was afraid it might be a devil or something. She hestitated. A hollow voice of a boy came ringing through the doorway. "Open, or I shall break the door down. Open."

Fumbling her way over the hardwood floor, the old hag came

and the place was strangely familiar. She heard her
[illegible] thing, but she could not see him distinctly. Then she grew
[illegible] and she wondered to herself what had happened to her. She
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forth and opened the door. When she saw the person standing in the threshold, her heart missed a beat. There in front of her was the young man whom she beat yesterday. The boy said in a hollow voice, "I am a spirit and I shall haunt you forever." He wished to continue but the dog rushed forward and tried to bite the boy. The old hag stopped the dog, since she knew she was in a tight spot. The dog obeyed the woman and he went back to his corner growling and watching carefully. "You are dead and the devils will come and take you soon. Your stomach will be ripped open and your intestines will flow out. You will rot away slowly and you will become ashes. I am a spirit and I will haunt you forever. Forever and forever, you old hag. Forever." And he touched the old woman with a cold icy hand.

By now the old hag, with the ~~aberrated~~ wherrant mind, was in a fit. She trembled and she quivered. She said, "I know I am not suffering for my sins of long ago. But I am suffering for what I did to you. Forgive me, forgive me." Then the boy touched her again and she felt the cold icy hand. Then he said, "I will come again and again and haunt you today." Then he closed the door silently and went down the steps.

Now the mind of the hag was whirling like the propellor of an airplane. She could not think straight. "Are all these years that I spent in purifying myself to come to an end like this?" Then in the table she saw those familiar books she used to read. She took them and tore them into pieces. Then she tored her hair and she went around the room and smashed whatever that happened to be in her way. Then she came across the gun that wing dropped while he was running away from the dog the other day.

She was going to pick it up and smash it to pieces and then she remembered the spirit of the boy. If he should come back and see it, then it would be too bad for her. So she took the gun and hid in under a big heavy box on the corner. She was surprised as she had a box just like that in her own house. And now here in hell, in a place that resembled her house very much, there was this box. She hid the gun under the big box and covered it up with a lot of heavy paper. She wasted a long time looking for the paper because her sight was blurred because she had sinned. Gathering the paper all together, she covered the gun up very well.

Then there was a knock at the door. The hollow voice of the boy came bellowing through. "The devils are here. Prepare yourself for dissection. We are ready." Then coming through the door, the old hag saw rather indistinctly a group of boys that appeared to be like devils. She saw horns and tails on the devils and she was afraid. This time the devils had the dog tied on the little corner. And the dog barked and barked. "I am going to dissect you and drain your blood out." Saying this the boy, who was the spirit of Wing, took hold of a long knife. The old hag muttered and yelled, "No. No. Don't do it. I do anything you say only don't cut me up." But before she could say anymore she felt something poke her and then the boy drew up a bowl of red liquid and said to her, "Here, put your hand in this, red hot blood. Here, feel it." Although the woman could not see well she saw the red liquid. She felt cold all of sudden and her fear became so great that she could not talk.

In a corner she saw fires burning. The boy said, "We will burn your intestines and your liver and your organs. Ha, ha. We will burn all of you."

The old woman became a shivering maniac. She uttered sounds but was unable to influence the devils in what they were going to do with her. The eyes of the hag stood out like white balls of dead fish. And chills ran up and down her spine. She was so afraid now that she could not speak. She sat in her little stool, frozen stiff like ice in the cold chilly winter. She was a maniac now. Time and time again she tried to utter sounds, but speech was powerless to her now and she knew it.

The devils danced around her and once in awhile they poked her with the long sharp forks they were holding in her hands. There were tears in the old hag's eyes and she had a more difficult time trying to see clearly now. The devils chanted and hummed and they wailed and they shouted. The mind of the hag was all confused. She thought, "I have died. Now, am I to die another death? I should not have struck the boy. I should not have struck the boy." Then one of the devils pull up long organs of intestines and showed them to the hag. "These are yours, are they not? Look at them. They no longer belong to you. They are going to be burned. Do you see this? This is your stomach. But it no longer is. It too is going to be burned. Ha. Ha." The hag closed her eyes. She did not look. She could not look. There was a sick feeling in her body. From the other side of the room the odor of burning flesh or burning papers came to the nostrils of the hag. The old hag wondered why she did not die now. Must she die so slowly? She could not stand it. But she knew she would have to die a slow painful death because the books said so. Now she regretted having read those books.

She kept her eyes closed and did not dare to open them.

The little dog in the corner was barking and barking. He whined and then he yelped. But no one paid any attention to him. One of the devils went over to him and gave him a stroke on the head with a heavy stick. Then the dog silent down and cowered in the corner and did not bark anymore.

The devils went around and ~~went~~. And they continued with their chanting. The old hag continued with her shivering. Then she pinched herself to make sure that all she was seeing was not a nightmare. Then she opened her eyes and tried to see clearly with them. But everything was blurred and indistinct. She squintted. But she could not make anything out clearly.

She thought. "I am suffering with my eyes. Just like the woman in that book. I am in hell and I am suffering all the torture that she suffered. The people who wrote those books certainly knew what they were writing about. I suffer. I suffer."

Then the hollow voice of the boy came to her ears. "I want my gun. Give me my gun. If I do not have it, then I will cut your head off. Give me my gun." And with great difficulty the woman answered, "I have not your gun. I have not it."

She said to herself, "I have suffered so far, I might just as well suffer the rest of the way."

Then the hollow voice of the boy said, "Come devils, we shall come again tomorrow. Tomorrow we will have more tortures for our friend. More painful tortures." And the group of devils went out.

After they left, the hag felt herself. All around her abdomen she felt something wet, but it was not cut open. She looked but she could not see distincly. She did not know whether

[illegible] a heavy sigh. Then the dog-[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] and did not look anywhere.

[illegible] The old hag complained with her usively. Then she [illegible]

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her stomach had been taken out or not.

All this time that the devils went away, the hag lamented and repented.

She moaned and she talked to herself. She was crying in a most pitiful tone and her wailing came out into the quiet country air. The dog barked and barked. Feeling her way over the room, the old hag went over and untied the dog. He came up and licked her face. Then holding the dog in her arms, she cried and cried. Despite the fact that the old hag's stomach and intestines were taken out of her, she did not feel any pain. But she felt blood all over her. Wet blood.

Then taking the dog in her arms she slowly made her way to the bed and she lay on it. She was too tired and too afraid now to worry anymore about the spirit and the devils. Let them come back, she didnot care anymore now. Let them kill her, she did not mind. Only why must she suffer such slow painful tortures.

And in her bed she lay and slept until the barking of the dog woke her up again. Then she got up and was surprised that she was not very weak. Feeling a little tired she went out and sat down. She looked over the land and saw some indistinct objects in the far distance. To her, they looked like trees. What they were she did not know. The heat from a burning object far away gave her strength and hope. She sat in the open air for a long time. A very long time.

Then she thought back of all the things that she had done these many years. Perhaps the day she sinned so long ago had something to do with this suffering today. But she worried and worried all the time.

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The afternoon wore on. The hours passed. The dog barked. The hag worried.

Then the night came. The old hag went to bed and she slept an uninterrupted sleep, caused by exhaustion and fear. The morning dawned gray and cloudy.

The old hag was surprised that she was still alive. The weather was bad and she had an even more difficult time in trying to see. She heard the tickling of a clock. She woke up and all through the morning she did nothing more than just sitting down and thinking.

Then there was the knocking at the door. A voice said, "We are back. We are coming, old hag. Prepare for your tortures." Then the door opened and the devils and the boy entered. Immediately the chanting started. And the devils danced around and around the old woman. The dog watched on. This time he did not come forth and cause any trouble. He remembered the blow that was delivered to him by one of the devils. So he stayed in his corner little caring what all the fantastic doing was about.

There were many huge elaborate spikes which the devils were holding in their long claw-like hands. And once in awhile they waved them up and down. And one of them pricked the old hag with one of them. She yelled, "Leave me alone. Leave me alone." But the devils continued jumping and dancing and moving around and around.

And one of the devils started a fire and said, "Today we will all see you burn. The fire is almost ready." Then the spirit said, "Give me a gun. The gun that I left." The hag said, "I have not got it." Then the spirit said, "Prepare yourself to

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be thrown into the fire."

Then the group of devils caught her and carried her around the room. And they let the heat of the fire warmed her.

The spirit said again, "Where is my gun?" Now the old hag was scared almost to death and she went over to the big box and from the bottom drew the gun out and handed it to the boy.

Then she heard the merry laughter of boys. Real down-to-earth boys. The the boy, who was supposed to be the spirit, said, "Here you old near-sighted hag. Here is your pair of glasses. I stole it from you one night and decided to play a joke on you. I know about those books."

Then the old hag put on her pair of glasses and she saw that she was in her own home. And there in front of her was Wing and the group of boys dressed up like devils.

The group of boys came out and Wing said, "I guess we torture her enough. We better leave her alone now." Then the group of boys took off their fantastic ~~costume~~ costumes and went home.

At last the spring came once again, and in the spring of that year the long awaited journey home arrived once more. To Tommy who had been patiently waiting, this day was an important event, for he was to make his homeward journey.

The green fields stretched far over the horizon, and the leaves of the green trees were beautiful in this day of spring. Golden sunshine bathed the air, and the freshness and cleaness of this day were indeed wonderful to Tommy. It was a perfect day to start for his beloved home, a home which he returned every year on this certain day, and he was all prepared to start his second journey home.

He came out into the open air, and noticed the freshness of spring, the green grass, and the really golden poppies, glimmering in the sunlight. He walked softly over the brown roads, good solid earth, once so dear to him. The very earth which he once himself, when mortal, used to wander and play on.

How good it is to walk on solid earth again, he said to himself.

Tommy walked on the brown roads, and tears began to well in his eyes when he thought back two years ago on that fatal night when he was killed so suddenly.

It all came back to him,like a dream, so far away, so apart, but still clear and precise indeed.

He remembered the girl, his friends Cary and Dick, the doctor's office, his suffering, his sister Martha, his father and mother. It was on this same day two years ago that it happened. How could he forget that day, that tragedy.

Poor mother, Tommy said, she would never forgive me for

what I did.

He remembered he was eighteen then, young, alive in the world, happy, little realizing the tragic consequence of one night of pleasure, one night, one moment, one fatal moment to him, loving the girl, in her arms, feeling her warmth, her lips, the tingling sensation when he kissed her then.

He did not know it would happen. But he was a young boy then, in fact a man, seeking the companionship of the other sex, only a natural occurence, something that most men and boys did.

It all happened the night he came home from school, and Cary, one of his closest friends said to him, Listen, Tommy, come with us tonight. You'll be all right, nothing's going to happen you you. I come and call you tonight.

He remembered he did not answer, he never did anything like that before. True, he had thought of girls, often in his day dreaming, but not in that way, he could not.

What do you say? Cary demaned again.

I don't know, Tommy had answered then.

Aw, come on. Don't be afraid.

Tommy remembered that he consented. All evening he began to feel afraid, afraid of the new adventure before him, his first contact with women intimately. At dinner his mother said, Why, Tommy, are you ill? You're not eating much.

Tommy answered then, No, mother. I'm all right.

That evening Cary and Dick came. Cary said, Does your mother know where you're going?

I told her I am going to the show with you boys.

Got any money?

Yes.

The three boys went down the street, and then turned into a dark alley, away from the main street.

Tommy remembered then his fear, his bewilderment at what he was about to do, his lying to his mother. Cary noticed his uneasiness.

Say, what's the matter with you? This is nothing to be afraid of. Look at Dick here, he comes often to these places.

Tommy walked with the boys, in a dreamy state, imagining how it would happen, how it would end. He shuddered.

The three boys came before a house, a sort of boarding house, with many rooms. Tommy hestitated for a moment, having a sudden desire to run away, to be apart, alone from here. His heart seemed to grow cold, having no longer the desire to think of girls, or to love them, even if they take money for it.

He followed Cary and Dick in, his heart beating wildly.

When Tommy saw the girls, he had a strange feeling, a feeling he never had before. Something inside him gripped him, and he felt sick.

The girl sat on his lap, with her warm bare arms around him.

I never saw you here before, handsome.

Tommy said, No. I-I never came here before.

Oh, I see, the girl said.

He felt awkward, not knowing what to say, how to act, feeling lost, strange, ashamed suddenly.

The girl on his lap bent down and kissed him full on the

lips. Tommy felt hot, warm, intoxicated with this girl. She kissed him again, and suddenly Tommy grapped her, holdkng her tight, pressing his lips on her red mouth.

Then all that happaned. The soft hands, the warmth of her body, her eyes, lips, he remembered it all.

When he came down and rejoined his companions he was hot and warm. The cold air outside cooled him a little.

Cary said, Well, how was it?

Tommy said, All right, I guess.

Cary laughed, and Dick smiled.

All the way home Tommy knew that he would never be himself again. He had done something sinful, something vulgar, something he did not like. But it happened just like that, and there was nothing that he could do. His thoughts brought the picture of the girl to his mind again and again, seeing her lips, her legs, all the filth, the ugliness, the uncleaness of the whole thing.

In bed that night he dreamt, a fusion of girls and kisses.

After a restless night, he woke up tired and exhausted in the morning. He washed himself and came down to breakfast.

His father and sister had finished, only his mother was at the table.

Did you enjoy the show last night? his mother demanded.

Yes, it was fine.

His voice sounded so strange that Tommy was startled. He did not feel like talking at all, being tired, listless.

He went to his room. It was Saturday fortunately, and there was no school for him that day. From his window he looked down

upon the city, ugly to him now, dirty and unclean. It still was the same city he used to know, the same people, the same houses, but something was changed, he himself was changed, his thoughts were unclean and filthy. Tommy was miserable, worried, troubled.

His sister Martha was playing downstairs, and the sweet music so quiet and holy filled the whole house. Martha sang in an angelic voice, and for one brief moment Tommy saw the flowers, the birds, the trees. Then the music stopped, and the picture of the girl, the dark night, his two companions came into his mind. Somehow it all bothered him. Why he did not know. Perhaps everyone felt like that the first time.

Tommy felt like crying, wishing he had not gone with Cary and Dick. Tommy continued staring out the window, feeling lost and lonely in his weariness.

His mother came upstairs, and said, Tommy, is there something wrong? You're not looking well today.

Nothing, mother, Tommy said, I'm just a little tired.

The whole day Tommy stayed in his room, having no desire to go out, no wish to do anything. He was sick in body and mind.

The days passed by, and Tommy saw Cary and Dick often. They often spoke about going again. Tommy had paid no attention to their talk. Somehow he felt he could never go again.

Then one day, many months after he had forgotten about the incident, he felt sick. He had never felt well since that day, but now something was happening. He felt a itchy feeling all over his body, and he had a desire to scratch himself all over. Then his neck developed some red scars, ugly and un-

comfortable. Then Tommy realized suddenly what happened. He had contracted a terrible disease. How could he tell his mother? Or his father?

The days passed by, and Tommy found it necessary to quit school for a few weeks. At this time his father and mother had learned the truth.

Tommy remembered when he appreached his mother and told her. She stood there, unable to say anything. Yet she did not condemn at all. All she said was, You must take care of yourself. You must see a doctor at once.

Tommy had a feeling of heaviness in his heart. He would not do anything to hurt his mother, his mother whom he always had loved and respected. But it happened, and that was that.

Mrs. Allan kept her hurt feelings to herself, treating Tommy as though he was not sick, talking to him, doing nothing to embarrass him at all.

Cary and Dick in the meantime had discovered what was wrong with their friend Tommy.

Cary said to him one day, I'm so sorry Tom boy.

Tommy did not answer, suddenly hating Cary, and what he had led him into.

Tommy remembered the day he visited the doctor, sitting there in the office, ###### feeling embarassed, ashamed, growing red in the face when the doctor came out.

The doctor said, You should be careful of yourself from now on. In the more serious stages great complication might arise. Then sometimes it is too late to do anything that would help.

Tommy felt a pang of sudden fear in his heart. Perhaps

he might even die.

Coming out in the street, he felt as though lost in a dream, lost in the ugliness of the earth, the tragedy of the thing. One little moment of bliss, and this was the result.

He walked on, forgetting the people, the city, lost in his wanderings, his thoughts back to the girl, her lips, and the night, the way it all happened.

I don't want to die, oh, God, why must it happen to me? It was my first time, why must I suffer? Oh, God, make me well again. Tommy felt the hot tears in his eyes then.

Suddenly he heard someone shouting, a voice from far away, Look out! A dark object loomed like a giant in front of him. His head reeled, and bright stars appeared before his eyes. Then darkness, and he passed away, that lonely day to the land beyond.

It all came back to Tommy now, this fine spring morning, feeling the freshness of spring. Tommy was again going home, to his mother and his sister Marha. He wondered about Martha. She was not looking well the last time he saw her, her face was gloomy, pale, and she looked sick and weak.

Tommy walked silently over the the brown roads. Soon he will be home.

Now I am going home, Tommy thought, and tears dropped on the dewy grass, for Tommy was making his homeward journey. He passed silent as a breath, walking toward his home.

Tommy noticed the green trees, the leaves, the golden flowers, growing and breathing in this day of spring, laughing in the sunshine, alive and breathing, and Tommy felt himself

alive and breathing too. Two long years since he died, but he was making his homeward journey. He came upon the city, his city, the place he lived in when mortal. Gliding through the street he came upon his very home, the flowers were in bloom. There were peace and quietness.

Tommy felt a sob in his throat, and that moment he felt the tears gushing out of his eyes, dropping, feeling so alone, sick in heart and mind, desiring once more to hold his mother close to him.

He entered the familiar steps, slowly, feeling every step, every movement, remembering again, It was here that I used to sit with Martha, it was here.

He heard footsteps in the room and he heard his mother's voice. She entered the room, and Tommy went forward and touched her hair.

Mother, he said.

But Mrs. Allan did not hear, did not notice. Then Tommy remembered. She could not hear him, not now.

Tommy saw her mother crying, and then his father entered the room, and there was great sadness in his eyes.

The poor dear, he said, the doctor has given up all hope for her life. She does not know it.

Mr. Allan blinked his eyes.

First Tommy was taken away from us, now Martha is...

Tommy saw his mother broking in hysterical tears. Mr. Allan was trying his best to keep his tears back.

Mrs. Allan said, Henry, there could be a little hope, isn't there? She will get well, wouldn't she? There was a tremor

in her voice, and Tommy heard it, and he felt sad.

Tommy knew then that something was happening to Martha, he could feel it in the very air, a feeling of desolation and weeping.

He entered the room where Martha was, and a sickness in the air came to his nose, and there he saw Martha, pale and fragile as a wilted flower, very white, changed so much, that Tommy could not recognize her for a moment.

Tommy went closer and saw Martha moving back and forth as though in great pain. She coughed now and then, clenching her fists, having great difficulty, her thin body shaken with fright and sickness. Tears well in her eyes, tears caused by the terrific pain while coughing so furiously. The nurse came forward with a glass of medicine.

Here, take this.

Martha took the medicine, and felt better.

The doctor came in.

Miss Smith.

Yes?

The doctor whispered softly, Keep careful watch over the patient. I feel so sorry for her.

Tommy heard this, and he yelled out, You must save her, you mustn't let her die. Oh, doctor, you must!

Then Tommy remembered himself. They could not hear him.

Tommy went to the bedside.

Martha, you must get well. Mother and father would be so lonely if you go away too.

But Martha turned and tossed on her pillow.

For two hours Tommy stayed in Martha's room, weeping and

crying softly. Once in awhile Martha would mutter something quietly. The doctor came to her bedside.

The fever is rising, Miss Smith, phone the hospital and inform them to send an ambulance at once. Hurry!

All right, doctor.

The nurse took up the telephone and dialed the number.

The line is busy, doctor.

Phone again, but hurry!

The nurse phoned again.

An ambulance is coming right away.

Dr. Mills sat down beside Martha, feeling her pulse carefully. Martha was white and pale, and a look of death came into her face, a look of the end of suffering, peaceful and yet frightening.

Dr. Mills said, Miss Smith, I think you better call the mather and father up. I'm afraid it is too late to wait for the ambulance.

The nurse came quietly down the stairs.

Mr. Allan, and you too, Mrs. Allan, the doctor want both of you upstairs right away.

Mrs. Allan was trembling, What's the matter? Did something happen?

Please come now, the nurse answered, and then disappeared upstairs.

Martha darling, are you all right? Mrs. Allan was weeping.

Mother, I feel so weak... Martha's voice was hardly audible. I feel so tired...her voice died away.

Toom heard his mother cried out, Doctor, Come quickly!

Dr. Mills said, She's gone. Mrs. Allan put her head on

the bed and cried. Tommy cannot control himself, and he broke into weeping.

The room was silent, no one spoke.

Martha came and up and said, Tommy, where did you come from? I'm so glad to see you.

You know, Martha, Tommy said, I didn't recognize you when I saw you so thin and frail on the bed.

I've been sick, Martha said, and I always knew that someday I shall join you.

Martha sobbed and cried, looking at her corpse.

Martha, there's no use in crying now, Tommy said, I am glad for you, for you are well at last. You do not have to suffer anymore.

But Martha kept on crying.

Tommy told her, You must not weep no more. You are free from pain and suffering now. We could always come back and visit our house. We could be happy together.

Then his sister Martha smiled, and Tommy was eased.

He led Martha by the hand, and they came downstairs. They saw their mother and father on the far corner of the room. Mrs. Allan was weeping. Mr. Allan was very quiet.

Tommy said, Martha would you play one more song for me?

What song, Tommy?

Something sweet. He thought awhile.

Shubert's Serenade.

Martha began playing, and Tommy listened to this sweet song, which he had not heard for so long a time. Martha commenced to sing in a sweet and quiet voice, like an angel.

Tommy looked at his father and mother.

They sat there like statues.

Will they be happy again? Tommy wondered.

Martha sang, and her song was beautiful, a song of farewell, farewell to her home, her mother and father. When she finished, Tommy said, Beautiful, Martha.

And Martha was pleased. Thus did the two say farewell to their beloved home.

Martha followed Tommy into the noisy streets. She felt the sunshine on herself, and the spring air flowed through her.

She said, Nature is grand and glorius. Tommy smiled.

Martha, we are going home, to our new home.

And Tommy was making a homeward journey, only Martha was with him now. They passed the noisy streets and came upon the countryside. Martha saw the green fields over the horizon. She saw the trees, the grass and the flowers. The two walked silently toward the horizon. They wandered onward, onward.

The trees threw forth long, dark shadows, and the city lights glittered in the distance. Two shadows continued, walking, Tommy and Martha, to their new home over the horizon so far away.

It was the torrid heat of the warm Sahara...the hotness of the burning equator...the fires of red hell... the zip of strong pepper...the taste of tabasco...the steam in a Turkish bath...and the temperature of hot and dry weather.

There were dead faces, blue, white, weird, and odd. There were strange persons, tall, eerie, short and frightful. There were voices, loud, soft, moaning, and whispering. There were nightmares about camels, devils, trees, desert sand, and odd and peculiar things.

It was a small and cold room, the wallpapers browned by the age of timeless days. The bleak and barren walls had a picture without a frame, the electric lights were dimmed, and he, the boy, was turning and tossing uncomfortably.

The white sheet in the bed...the pillow so high...the bottle of cough medicine...the hot water bag...the nurse so calm... the doctor speaking in a soft voice...the mother softly crying... the fever rising, rising...he, the boy, suffering, dreaming fantastic dreams.

He turned in his bed, his body hot and warm...the fever was rising rapidly, dangerously.

Out of a blur and timeless nowhere, he distinguished the sound of running water in the sink, the crying of his sister, a door being opened, then shut. The lights dimmed into foggy nothingness, the white sheet faded away, the room turned and whirled and he, the boy, turned with it. A strong fire seemed to be burning inside of him, scorching him with biting claws.

"Oh, doctor, is he all right?" A weird white face. "Oh, doctor!" Then another face, odd and strange. "Is he..." Another

face. The room caught fire immediately, burning with quick cutting flames, spreading with increasing pace all over the house, eating its way into the furnitures and walls. The walls were burning, the dry burning smoke crawling up Dan's nostrils. He woke with a sudden start, saw the red flames jumping, and dancing all over. Dan coughed, and hastily put on his robe. It was three o'clock in the early dawn, but it was black night outside.

The fire spread rapidly over the house, eating with burning tongues of flames all that stood in its way. Everyone in the house woke up, and ran quickly outside, choking and coughing furiously. With a sudden start Dan remembered his dog Tarzan, and he heard the dog barking loudly from upstairs, yelping loudly for help. Dan went up the burning stairs, two steps at a time. The stairs collapsed right then, and Dan was caught. There was no way of escape. Dan slapped out the fire that was burning his dog to death, and the dog barked loudly, thanking Dan for saving his life.

Dan rushed to the back window, the fires leaping on all sides of him, yelling loudly for help. And out of the loneliness of that black night, nothing moved or breathed.

The dark gray smoke was like a thick and unpenetrable blanket, strong and sturdy. Dan choked, and he was not able to breathe, the flames burning closer, the smoke getting into his eyes and nose.

Dan yelled again. No answer. Where was everyone? Where?

He heard the loud crackling of the fires, the timbers and beams diminishing into red hot embers.

Tarzan whined, then died in his hands, and Dan was choking. His voice caught in his throat, like a trap, and Dan slumped down on the floor, thoroughly weakened by the smoke and fire. The roaring fire rushed close to him, the licking flames bit him. His flesh became black and he became ashes, red hot ashes.

Turning, tossing, he suddenly felt strange, a peculiar strangness of being lost, being out of place, nowhere. Through a hazy remembrance he saw the fire, his dog Tarzan. He looked around him, and saw miles of endless desert sand, white and smooth like whipped cream. Just a plain sea of unending desert, nothing else to break this limitless sea of sand.

The Arabs crowded around him, the camels looked at him with almost humanlike eyes. Faces blurred into the camels. Camels looked like persons he knew. Then the image was gone, away somewhere.

The white robes of Arabs flowed in graceful movements, the buildings of the Arab town was white, like the robes they were wearing, and the jet black face of the people stood out prominently against their white robes.

Men wandered this way and that, everything confused and apart, and the strangeness that Dan felt was like a nightmare, a dream of being lost in the universe of time.

The Arabs were preparing to go across the white sea, the warm desert, and Dan found himself walking along with them. The hot sun blazed down, and the wind was scorching hot. The caravan started slowly, traveling its slow and dreary way across the desert of the dead. Dan trod onward, steadily, but still forever trodding, walking, running. What seemed

like years dragged into centuries of untimeliness.

The faces of black Arabs...the fire...Tarzan...the white desert...fires engines roaring, spashing water...where? or where?...the hot desert...Arabs...Tarzan...fire...Dan was confused...mixed up...foregetting...remembering suddenly.

Completely tired and thoroughly exhausted Dan fell down on the desert floor. The torrid heat of the burning sand seeped right through his clothes. Squirming and trying desperately to raise himself up, Dan found that the Arabs had unexpectedly disappeared into space far away. He was lost in the ocean of sand. The wind grew increasingly hot, burning and flaming, so hot that Dan could almost not stand it at all. Suddenly the hot wind grew in velocity, howling and moaning like the tragic voice of a lost ship in the stormy sea, fighting and struggling its way to safety. The desert sand swirled into the gushing air. Dan was caught in the middle of the storm , the hot sand and wind burned him like darting tongues of fire, piercing and sharp like a blade.

The thick fog of flying sand made it difficult to see ahead. Time and again, Dan felt as he was about to suffocate to death. His throat felt parched and extremely dried. The storm fought along with increased fury. Then as sudden as it started, it broke down, then it was gone, like a dream.

Palm trees loomed in front. Dan rushed forward, but he never seemed to reach it, the trees receding farther and farther away. Despite his fatigued condition, Dan ran, but he never reached the trees. He was panting for breath, and he was weak and dazed beyond endurance.

Dan felt himself slipping into sleep...Tarzan barked... the dates of the palm trees...running very fast...the Arabs... the camels...he was lost, lost where?...the hot sand...the storm...the darting tongues of fire...he was weak, sleepy.

He drowsed away...and the soft music of guitars came to his ears, and beautiful senoritas came before his wearied eyes. Great and tall palm trees lined the streets. The sun was shining very brightly. Dan saw many men with huge sombero and highly colored shawls singing, and playing their instruments.

Peppy music flowed out into the street from the sidewalk cafes. A swaying dance was in progress, hips swaying this way and that, fiery and peppy songs echoing from the throats of the lusty singers. Dan felt hot, very hot suddenly. He ordered a glass of water, but when he drank it, it was like a hot glass of tabasco. He was very hot and warm.

Then the Arabs came again...across the endless sea of desert...the fires in the house burning rapidly...the water splashing in the sink...the desert storm dying down...the senoritas with the full breast...the glass of tasbasco... songs and rumbas...the hotness of the equator... he was perfectly uncomfortable. He was burning.

Then Hades came into view. Weird strange devils came into view, rushing and chanting in peculiar ecstasy, dancing around and around, moaning their song of death. Red devils with horns, black devils with pointed toes, long tails. They chanted, "Death. Death. Death. To you, and you and you."

Death to him, to Dan, and a sudden chill stormed through him.

Dan was afraid, feeling very strange.

Dan writhed and twisted around, but he felt himself burning rapidly, quickly, burning and burning.

The guitars of the dancers...hips swaying back and forth... the desert sand...Tarzan barking...the palm trees...running faster...the trees going back and back...the wind howling in the storm...black devils, red devils...death...death to you, and you...to Dan...to him...ha...ha...not me...no...damn the devils...ha...Dan writhed and twisted all around. He was burning.

Then the Amazon jungles leered into view...savage faces. They peered suspiciously from behind thick bushes. Naked warriors flitted back and forth. Mosquitoes swarmed all around, humming and stinging. Drums...spears..painted faces...ghastly and completely ugly.

The black savage leader came forward, grapped Dan with a strong and sturdy arm, hurled him into a big bowl of boiling water. Dan felt himself sinking...in the abyss of of the deep dark cavern.

Then the voice of Tarzan barking for help...his room was on fire...his father and mother running out of the burning house... water splashing in the the sink...firemen climbing here and there... falling pieces of wood burning...the caravan going across the city... the camels with human eyes...he saw them far away...now he was eating dates from the palm trees...the howling wind of the storm...his throat was not dry now..then the spanish song of love...dancers glided gracefully by...the fires of hell... ah, the devils...with the long and terrible horns...eyes darting fires...the jungles of the Amazon...the oil burning

boiling in the black pot...burning flesh of human...then he was swimming in a swimming pool...cold...shill...then hot... then cold...hot...cold...the swimming pool, swimming there now, he Dan. himself.

Then a face. Then another. And another. "Oh, doctor, is he all right?" Voices from everywhere, from no where. "Oh, doctor." Then another face.

It was a small room. The wallpapers were browned by the age of time. And he the boy, was sleeping peacefully. He was breathing naturally now.

The white sheet in the bed...the pillow so high...the bottle of cough medicine...the hot water bag...the nurse so calm...the doctor watching...the mother softly praying...the fever slowly sinking...sinking.

Everything was quiet. The boy slowly opened his eyes, and he smiled a faint smile. He had passed the crisis. Now he could get well.

The voice of the doctor, "For awhile I thought he was gone. His fever reached almost to one hundred and five degrees. And slowly it sank."

The mother prayed on. The boy slept, peaceful, out of danger. In peaceful sleep.

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